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POND LILIES.

BY VIVIEN.

Out on the lake's gleaming breast
Fair white pond-lilies sit at rest,
Leaving themselves in the water's flow,
Swaying and bending to and fro.

Sunbeams quivering o'er them play:
Light and shade of the golden day
Touches them gently, then fades away—
A silent death—all else is gay.

Under the shadow of willow-tree,
Gently rocked by the cool soft breeze,
Floats a skiff like a lily white,
Idly floats in the mellow light.

Two are in the small boat there,
Two young lives untouched by care;
A youth, his face aglow with love,
Watches the face of the girl above.

And she, her soft cheek's tinted flush
Deepening fast to a crimson blush,
Meets his eyes, then glances away—
Ah! looks say more than words can say:

Then silent, half awed by the solemn hush
She toys with the water—the marsh-bird's song
Breaks the silence—the boat floats on.

MANUEL THE DANE

A STORY OF THE TROPICS.

BY A DISTINGUISHED AUTHOR,

Whose name on account of circumstances connected with the story is kept secret at her own request.

The colony of British Guiana is a fitting land for mysteries. Never were forests half so grand—and their wonderful depths seem haunted. Here there are dreamy-eyed beauties—the delicate tinting of whose cheeks is like that of the Southern flowers.

These fair Creoles look out at you from vine-latticed windows; you hear them singing to the tinkling touch of the guitar; see the fall of delicate laces—perhaps a white hand flashing amid roses.

Or you pass Government-House—supposing the city to be Georgetown, Demerara—and the grim, black guards at the gate, very tall and stately, give you a half-military salute if you are a stranger. You hear the great band, of which the citizens are proud, play "God save the Queen!"—for these are the dominions of her majesty—and you enter the wide square, thronged with equipages blazoned with arms—thronged with citizens—with nurses and their charges.

Here and there you meet with a quadroon even more beautiful than many of the white-fingered ladies in the carriages. Each of these dark beauties has a life-experience that would perhaps thrill you in the recital.

I have been thinking over the romance of a strangely chequered existence—a most eventful career, with the incidents of which a friend has acquainted me—and I have come to the determination of writing its full particulars, notwithstanding some of them will be regarded as the offspring of the wildest fancy. But in this, as in so many histories, the most improbable is the most reliable.

In a few words I must relate some previous facts to my readers, before I enter upon the leading incidents of my story. Let them imagine a young girl—a mere child—living in a mean and dingy habitation, with a man in whom the love of gold had eaten out every sentiment of nobleness and pity and honor. That child was Ardella St. Lemoine—that man was the guardian to whose care she had been intrusted, when her father, after the death of his wife, left Guiana on a distant voyage. This guardian had passed for a man of high integrity—but when the news came of the wreck of the ship in which Mr. St. Lemoine had embarked, and the loss of all on board, then the desire to appropriate to himself the large property of St. Lemoine, of which property he was sole agent and manager, led naturally to the abuse and neglect of the orphaned child.

But we shall not linger on this picture. In truth it might have been omitted altogether, save for its connection with another prominent personage of our story. While Ardella St. Lemoine was thus seemingly the child of penury, and really the child of want, she became acquainted with a boy, a young Dane, of hot and impetuous temper, who had deserted from a merchant vessel in the harbor. This boy constituted himself her champion upon all occasions, fighting her battles as far as possible, and taking from his own slender stores anything that he thought would please or benefit her. It was one of those desperate cases of "boy-love," which, however much they may amuse grown people, are matters of terrible earnest to the boys themselves.

But Mr. St. Lemoine returned, though not until many years had elapsed—returned to expel his false friend, to take possession of his large estate, and to find his child, almost sick unto death from the treatment she had received, an inmate of the dwelling of a Mr. Mandeville, whose daughters had been attracted by the looks of the little Ardella and her evident suffering, and who had taken her, almost in defiance of her sordid guardian, into their own comfortable home.

With these prefatory remarks, touching matters which it is not necessary to refer to more in detail, we may commence our story. A story of love, of jealousy, of crime; a strange story, glowing with the hot life and passion of the Tropics.

CHAPTER I.

THE SPLENDID DWELLING—THE MINIATURE.

"Come here, Manuel; what means that strange red glow in your eyes?"

MANUEL AND THE CARIB CHIEF.

"The little child is to get well, sir," replied the boy, his features working with internal satisfaction.

"Did the physician say so?" asked Mr. St. Lemoine, who, quite exhausted by recent sickness, spoke in faint tones.

"Yes, sir—he says she will get well now, quick," replied the boy, the eager look yet brightening his face.

"Good, Manuel—thank you; you bring me news that will help me rally from this shock better than medicine. And now," said he, as he clasped the boy's brown hand in his own, "you are a noble fellow. What can I do for you?"

"For me?" asked the boy, glancing round vaguely.

"Yes—what are you doing?—what work, I mean?"

"I work not at all now," said the boy, with an uneasy look—"been long away; have nothing to do."

"Well—will you live with me? I am Della's father; I will take care of you, and you shall work for me—or study, if you like it."

"With you? with *her?*" cried the boy, his whole frame trembling with the thought.

"Yes, if she lives, poor thing," said the man, tenderly.

"She must live!" said the boy, solemnly.

"God grant it," was the low, fervent reply, "but—will you go with me?"

"Anywhere," replied the lad.

It was a long time before the poor, pale child could be removed to the beautiful apartments her father had caused to be furnished for her pleasure and convenience. It seemed like a dream to her, the terrible past—the strange present that surely must dissolve before her eyes. The cool, high rooms, with their mirror panels, their snow-white mattings, exquisite hangings of lace; the devoted servants, all eager to obey her lightest word; and then Manuel, handsome-eyed Manuel, who could be trusted to drive her in the little pony phaeton, and whose every glance even now was worship—Manuel, with the strong arms to bear her whenever exertion became painful—Manuel, not her servant, but her submissive slave, docile as he was to none but her.

It was very natural now to suppose that Ardella St. Lemoine was an heiress.

But the years were passing, and Della must be educated as became her station. Her health was very delicate, and the doctors advised that she should be sent to England; so it was decided that she was to return with Lucy Mandeville, who was only four or five years her senior, and who, during the illness of the child, had become much attached to her.

When Della heard the news she was quietly pleased. As for Manuel, the thought that he must lose his idol, even for a time, drove him nearly frantic.

"Can I not go with you, Miss Della?" he asked, repeatedly. "Who will look after you as I can? Who will you have to drive you and walk with you? I had rather die than stay at home without you," he cried, passionately.

So the little lady went to her father, and gravely requested that Manuel might accompany her to school.

Mr. St. Lemoine threw back his head and laughed.

"The boy is wild," he said. "No, no, the good ladies will see that you are taken proper care of. Besides, he is just getting to be of use to me—he is going to be a capital secretary—he writes my letters—so my little Della must go without her cavalier."

And Della went back as gravely to tell poor Manuel with a sad face that he must stay at home.

Then the youth frightened her with his vehemence.

"You will forget Manuel—you will never remember him who was your friend any more! I shall be as nothing to you—you who are growing up so beautiful! Well, well, go,—be ungrateful! It was *I* who took you up and held you to my bosom when you fell from the window in the old time. I, too, helped nurse you back to life—oh, Della! you are wicked—you are cruel!"

"But what shall I do?" said the child, the tears already falling from her eyes. "It is—it must be as papa says."

"Oh very well! Go and forget poor Manuel, whose whole life is bound up in you!" he cried, passionately, and flew up the stairs, where he paced the floor like an angry lion, that ominous red in his eyes gleaming now like the lurid fire of the battle-field, his whole frame quivering with emotion.

"Seven years, perhaps ten," he cried, wringing his hands. "She will then grow into a woman and forget me—a beautiful woman, and others will love her. She, too, may love! No, I swear, she *must* love only me! I will make her!" and his eyes glared again. "But stop—I will write good—I will perhaps write her father's letters—then, it may be, he will let me say one word to her. I will learn—I will study the English perfect—I will be a gentleman! I will make money; she *shall* love me!" and lifting himself proudly, he ceased to complain.

Della was sent to England. The ship sailed grandly down the bay—the gigantic palm-trees lessened in the distance—the beautiful flowering hedges seemed now an indistinct line along the coast, and Manuel, who had remained long after Mr. St. Lemoine had driven home in his carriage, walked the stelling in painful agitation. Should he ever see her again? Would she not forget him? No, she should never do that! He would contrive, in some way, to keep her in remembrance.

Meanwhile to kill the tedious hours of absence, Mr. St. Lemoine determined to erect a palatial residence in the neighborhood of Georgetown. He chose the site where then stood the ruins of an old French chateau, and procuring laborers, set them immediately to work. The grounds where once the scarlet flowers of the coffee-berry luxuriated amidst the glorious greenness of the tropical foliage, were now filled with a dense growth of underbrush. This was soon cleared away, new trees were planted, borders made, walks planned, and arbors erected.

It is almost incredible to the Northern comprehension how short a time suffices for the growth of Southern vegetation. I have seen a tree lopped till it was almost branchless, and in a few weeks it seemed wholly restored to its former luxuriance.

Mr St. Lemoine spared no expense in the furtherance of his splendid project. He imported laborers by the dozens. The water of the river was forced by pipes into marble fountains, and through the most exquisitely carved mouth-pieces jetted its silver showers. The rarest flowers were brought from all the conservatories, English and South American. There might be seen the gorgeous plumaged humming-birds, the metallic lustre of whose wings vied with the no less vivid tints of surrounding beds of roses. Grottoes were constructed of shells and corals, and through their midst, on the whitest sand, murmurous streams trickled. Toucans, with their beautiful beaks, black and yellow mocking-birds, whose brightness was as that of the sun, kept up their continual dance in and out among the shrubbery. The house was a miracle of beauty. The walls were dazzlingly white, and the French jalousies, of all colors, gave it a truly tropical, and therefore picturesque appearance. The halls and the floors of the lower rooms were of tesselated marble; the furniture was covered with white damask, and the Indian matting was curiously and delicately interwrought. The bedsteads were of iron painted white and gilded, and furnished with curtains of lace and silk, while the apartment intended for Della, when she should return to her tropic home, was a miracle of grace and splendor.

Years elapsed before all things were completed, and in the meantime Manuel was growing in favor with St. Lemoine. The young man was now twenty, tall, well-formed, and of a handsome, but singular, countenance. His deep eyes still retained their peculiar tinge—the iris seeming shotted with red, that, in times of unusual feeling or excitement, glowed with a strange fire. One would not have known the Danish cabin boy in the elegant young man, the secretary, ostensibly, of St. Lemoine, but treated by him as if he were a son. The young man had perfected himself in the English language; he had also, through the kindness of a young officer who often shared the hospitality of St Lemoine's castle-house, acquired a good knowledge of music, and performed well on several instruments.

St. Lemoine was sociable in an eminent degree. His housekeeper was a pretty Creole, with the slightest tinge of the Mustee in her complexion, and she performed the duties of her station in a most agreeable manner. During the prevalence of the land-trades, while the stifled atmosphere in the city carried disease and pestilence with it, St. Lemoine's doors were thrown open to all his friends. Not a day passed that officers of the army, beautiful ladies, and the rich merchants, with men of the highest standing, did not drive up to the Everglades, as St. Lemoine had named his new home. Nearly every week the governor of the colony, with some of his suite, might be seen lounging and chatting in the great parlors of the English St. Lemoine, and not unfrequently men of note, tourists, authors, and noblemen were his welcome guests.

One evening a large company had assembled. The governor was there, with his pretty niece, and his nephew, recently arrived in the colonies. Mr Mandeville was also present, with one of his daughters, the fair Claudine, who, with her sister, had so assiduously nursed poor little Della into life.

Manuel was present, sitting near St Lemoine, and close to him the young officer who had taken so much interest in the Dane's musical progress.

"Have you heard from Della lately?" asked the merchant, whose thoughts turned naturally toward the two fair girls so far from home.

"Oh, yes; Manuel here, writes every week, for really I am not equal to the task since my arm has been so lame," replied St Lemoine.

"It is five years; she must be grown into quite a young lady," said the merchant, musingly.

At mention of Della, the lieutenant gave an inquiring glance at Manuel, as much as to say—

"So there is a young lady in the case; why have you not told me before?"

"Yes, I should presume so," replied St Lemoine, his face glowing with paternal fondness as he spoke of her.

"Miss Claudine perhaps would like to see her favorite. Manuel," he added, turning to the young man, "will you bring me the little box of white ivory on my secretary."

There was a glow on cheek, forehead and lip, and the lurid, lambent fire played in his eyes. He hurried to the room, and found the box. His heart beat wildly. The little casket trembled in his passionate grasp.

"It is she; I know it; I feel it," he said, in low tones. "I will look—it is but right; only *one* stolen glance. I knew her and aided her before they did."

With shaking fingers he unclosed the lid, took the velvet case, inwrought with pearls, in his hand, opened it, and feasted upon the almost more than earthly beauty thus presented to his vision. Was that little Della? Could that glorious creature, with brow like ivory, and eyes like stars, be the once neglected, ragged, forlorn waif that he had seen and succored in her guardian's house?

Oh! what hopes, fears, doubts, longings, the view of that fair image created in his mind! He loved her, had always loved her as no other could. He, he alone, had felt the beating of her heart against his breast. He alone had held her in his arms. *His* lips alone had pressed those lips, that forehead. A wild, exulting triumph filled his soul; he shut the case, and hurried below, his cheeks hot, his eyes lighted with hope and eager, wild delight.

The picture was soon passed from hand to hand. Claudine was in raptures.

"The darling!" she exclaimed. "I see the same sweet smile of old! Ah! how I wish she were here!"

"So do I," said Mr. St. Lemoine. "I have, indeed, serious thoughts of sending for her. My Paradise wants an Eve," he added, laughing.

Manuel's heart beat with wild, quick throbs. By this time the miniature was in the possession of young Lieutenant Warren.

"She is most beautiful! most beautiful!" he repeated, after a searching look; and drawing a long breath, he turned again to Manuel, whose cheek flushed hotter and higher:—

"What eyes, what features, and what hair! The rare, true chestnut, dashed with a golden shade. Was she always as lovely? Is she as graceful, as *good*, as this picture presents her?"

"More graceful, more glorious!" murmured Manuel. "I have known her for a long time, and may be allowed to judge."

"Ah! what a face!" and the dark, handsome eyes scanned again the pictured lineaments. "I think I never saw its equal," he said, low and softly, his rapt gaze still riveted upon it. "I shall be so pleased to make her acquaintance!"

Manuel's eyes glowed with a sudden jealousy. For the first time he noticed the tall, erect figure of his friend—his noble countenance, and the advantage given him by his brilliant uniform. To have him there with Della! to subject her to the fascinations of his smiles, his handsome presence, the allurement of his rank! There were three other persons who spoke without reserve, and seemed peculiarly charmed with the loveliness of the miniature. One of these was the governor's nephew—by no means a handsome young man, yet not de titute of a certain kind of power, which ladies defer to, and sometimes admire more than beauty. The other was a middle-aged gentleman, whose wealth was reported to be fabulous—a kind-hearted man of amiable manners, whose silence passed for depth, and whose lightest saying was a marvel of wisdom not lightly listened to by those who reverenced his—gold.

The third was a nobleman, jaded with dissipation, yet retaining enough of his former beauty and *air distingue* to make him a great favorite with most ladies. He was an earl, broken down, it is true, but passing for a man of abundant means; while it was little suspected that his stay in the colony, where he was a constant diner-out, was rendered necessary by his poverty, and that save from an occasional run of luck at the gaming table, he was often literally without a cent. Still, by dint of good dressing, and all the outside indications of means, he kept more than a good-footing in society. He had long been on the lookout for an heiress; here was one who suited him exactly.

I mention these three thus particularly, as it will be seen they have a melancholy connection with this story.

The governor now stood near Mr. St. Lemoine, looking at the picture. He was a large, finely-formed man, looking all the dignity of his position.

"Really, if you are so thronged with visitors now," he said, laying it down as he spoke, "how will it be when this fair daughter of your house returns? You will hardly find room for them all."

"The Everglades is large enough," said Mr. St. Lemoine, "and I shall give the reins into her hands. She must take care of the company—as I have no doubt they will prefer. A young lady, attractive or otherwise, is more charming than an old man."

"I, for one, shall be delighted to be her subject when she reigns queen here," said the governor's nephew, gallantly.

"Which will be shortly," replied Mr. St. Lemoine, "for I think I have decided to recall her. She will come probably by the next steamer but one, and as I shall give a grand *fete* in her name, and in honor of her arrival, prepare yourselves to meet her."

CHAPTER II.

THE DANE'S FIRST JEALOUSY.

Della—the great heiress, the beautiful child-woman—was summoned home.

By letter, of course, which was dispatched to the town. Manuel took charge of the missive. The young lieutenant, happening to be at the Everglades, accompanied him, and, to Manuel's great but secret annoyance, descanted perpetually upon the charms of the beautiful Della.

"She will be delighted with this noble place, which she has never seen," he said, looking around upon statues, fountains, flowers, fruits, and the glittering, imposing white walls of the mansion, arabesqued by the shadows of the myriad leaves. "And how pleasant it will be for you, who will be always near her! I envy you."

Manuel urged his horse impatiently.

"How old did you say?" queried Lieutenant Warren, still pursuing the theme.

"Sixteen," replied Manuel, almost gruffly.

"Just the sweetest age of a woman. And think how fresh and blooming she will be!—just from the mother country. We have had no belles here for so long a time!—at least none so young and with such a lovely color. Ah! she will be besieged," and he ended with a sigh.

Manuel bit his lip, but betrayed by no other motion the fierce jealousy that was already burning at his heart. Safely depositing the letter, the young men rode back again, and as before with the lieutenant, his theme was Miss St. Lemoine.

"Suppose," he said, lightly, "suppose she comes as the affianced of some English gentleman—who knows?"

"I will shoot him?" cried Manuel, fiercely, the blood boiling in his veins, and his ungoverned passions flaming from his eyes.

"So, so!" thought Warren, after the first shock of the announcement was over, "the wind blows in that direction, does it?"

"Then you mean to constitute *yourself* her knight, to guard her from fiery dragons, in the shape of mustached gentry," he said, almost smilingly; "perhaps to keep her for some wary lover who has enlisted your services beforehand."

"Miss St Lemoine can guard herself, I fancy," said Manuel, coldly; "and as for her lovers, wary or not, it will be well for them to keep out of *my* way," he added, his anger again welling up.

"What do you mean?" asked the lieutenant.

"What I say," was the almost fierce reply.

"Then I am to understand that no one must be civil to Miss St. Lemoine, in your presence," said the officer, in tones somewhat irritated and full of sarcasm.

"Understand what you please," replied Manuel, morosely.

"Perhaps her father may have something to say in the matter. I take it you are not constituted Miss St. Lemoine's *sole* guardian."

"I am something that you never will be," said Manuel, grinding his teeth, and the red light of his eyes ominous.

"Ah! her lover, maybe; well, rest assured I shall never dispute the claim of so noble a gentleman as yourself;" and before the Dane could move his livid lips to form a reply, the lieutenant had put spurs to his horse and galloped on. Manuel shook his clenched fist in the air, and registered a vow which he fulfilled to the letter.

The next steamer brought glad tidings from Della. She was so delighted to be recalled home! Manuel glowed and quivered from head to foot, as he read the innocent missive. Her pets were mentioned; "had Manuel, the dear, good fellow! been very careful to attend to them? Would he hold himself in readiness to be her cavalier again! because he must remember she knew no one there, and should be lonely; and did he ever think of the old walks he took with her?"

"I wonder what you would give for a like token, Mr. Lieutenant?" murmured Manuel, pleasantly.

"Did he think she should like her new home?" and she asked many questions that it would be only possible to answer to the

living presence, as she would come before a letter could reach her.

At last the looked-for, longed-for hour arrived. The great cannon thundered in the harbor, the flag of England swung in the tropical breeze, boats dotted the waters for a mile around, the docks and wharves, lined with people, resounded with shouts of welcome.

In his magnificent baroueche—a recent importation—sat Mr. St. Lemoine, his face radiant, his locks, silvered a little, streaming from his forehead, as at each shout of enthusiasm he lifted his hat and waved it.

"Manuel, do you go aboard for my little lady," he said; "it will be impossible for me, in my present state of health, with a gouty foot and a rheumatic arm. I will wait her coming in the carriage."

To no more willing person could he have delegated his office than to the handsome young secretary. Choosing a beautiful little boat over which was hung a crimson canopy, and whose stern was brightly cushioned and laid with carpets, he was soon rowed out to the great ship that sate her throne of waters stately as a sovereign.

Long before he reached the steamer, his quick eye had singled out Della. That graceful creature, standing near the door of the cabin, a little hat with soft gray plumes encircling it set lightly on her head, one hand clasped in that of Miss Mandeville—that was certainly she—he could not be deceived. She appeared to be talking with much animation; her eyes sparkled, while one uplifted hand was pointing out objects along the banks.

Manuel could not speak as he leaped up the ladder, and stood breathlessly but gracefully before her. She gazed for a moment, scanning his face rapidly, then holding out her hand with that sweet smile of old, she said—

"You must be Manuel."

"You are right, Miss Della," he said, with a bow and a glance that brought the color to her cheek.

"But where is my father?"

"On shore, waiting for you. His lameness detained him in the carriage or he would have come."

"Dear father!" murmured the beautiful creature, "I have longed to see him! But—but Manuel—how you are grown! and changed, somewhat; I should not have known you."

"Have I grown entirely out of your remembrance?" he asked.

"Oh! no, indeed; as I look at you now, you are the same Manuel—the friend and playmate of my childhood. Well, everything is ready, I believe. I am so impatient to see my father! Shall we go?"

It was not long before Mr. St. Lemoine held his daughter to his heart. His eyes feasted upon her ripened beauty; he was more than gratified—he was enraptured with her appearance; and in anticipation, saw the triumphs that arched the path of her bright future. Rapidly they drove home, Della all joy, all glad triumph—up the broad avenue, and a scene of splendor burst upon the bewildered girl.

"Is this my home, father? Why it is a palace. Did you think of me when you arranged these beautiful gardens? Thank you, oh, thank you, for bringing me to fairy land. Oh! the fountains! the statues! the dear singing-birds, in their silver cages!" and she clapped her hands childishly.

"We are to have you all to ourselves today," said her father, "so don't disturb yourself with the ceremonies of the toilet; we can't spare you a moment from our sight."

"We!" Manuel glowed from head to foot, exultantly.

To Della there was nothing peculiar or familiar in her father's speech, but she looked up to Manuel with glad, innocent eyes, as to a brother. The house was fit for a queen, she declared.

"How did you ever think of such beautiful things?" she asked her father. "No princess could have a more regal boudoir than I, little Della St. Lemoine."

And so she ran singing about the house, till the very servants caught the infection, and the whole household seemed to echo her ringing laugh.

"And here, too, is a superb piano! How thoughtful of my dear father!" she exclaimed, entering one of the grand parlors, and seeing the magnificent instrument thrown open, as if ready for her touch. "Here also is music, marked—who plays here, sir? Surely not my father. Does my father play, Manuel?"

"No, Miss St. Lemoine," was his reply. His cheek was as red as that of a blushing school girl.

"Miss St. Lemoine—oh pray don't call me that"—said the beautiful girl, carelessly striking a few chords—"say Della, for really I don't know myself by the other address, especially while I am at home."

As she played, Manuel turned over the music. Surprised at his accuracy, Della looked up with the exclamation—

"Way, Manuel! I think it is you who play."

"A little," was his confused reply.

"Then let me hear that little," she said, rising and yielding the seat to him.

Manuel obeyed. After he had played a set of quadrilles, Della expressed her admiration. Her looks plainly said, "who would have thought it of him, and he only a servant?"

"I play but indifferently," replied the young man, throwing the heavy locks from his brow. "I am, however, acquainted with Lieutenant Warren, a young gentleman who is an admirable performer, and who has been, in a measure, my instructor."

He gazed at her sideways, as if to mark, stealthily, the effect of his words.

"Lieutenant Warren," exclaimed Della, placing strong emphasis on the title. "A soldier! Oh! is he young? is he handsome? For you must know, Manuel, we school-girls dote on soldiers," she added, innocently.

The heavy music-book fell from the instrument with a crash, apparently by accident. Manuel stooped to lift it; a sudden movement of his hand had dashed it down. Now as his eyes met hers, she marked the minute, red lines, like the spokes of a minute wheel, radiating from the pupils. The frown that for a moment darkened his face was awful, and she involuntarily shrank back.

"I am very careless," he said, smilingly; but the smile was neither frank nor innocent; it was indescribable.

"Well, and what do you think of Manuel, my dear?" asked her father, before she retired for the night.

"He has grown tall, and very fine-looking certainly; but—I can't—quite—think—I like him—that is, as well as I did. Perhaps, because he is as a man more reserved than he used to be; and he treats me too much as if I were a woman grown."

"And pray what are you, child?" asked Mr. St. Lemoine, with a puzzled and amused look.

"Your own little Della," said the beautiful girl, falling within his outstretched arms. "Now don't you go to thinking I am a grown lady. I assure you I am almost as much a child as I used to be."

"God bless you, then, my child!" said Mr. St. Lemoine, with emphasis.

For the first time in her life, Della retired to a room wholly her own. She had chosen for a dressing-maid, an intelligent young mulatto girl, and her father had added another servant, a duenna-like old negress, who had for years been an attendant on his wife. She was weird and wrinkled, tall and bony; her features, notwithstanding her African lineage, were hawk-like; and her eyes, deep-set, possessed that peculiar, out-looking searching glance, that makes the most common-place face remarkable. Her head was surmounted by a red and black turban, and her attire was somewhat fantastic.

CHAPTER III.

DIAMONDS. A LOVER. A PLOT.

"Master told me to show you these in the morning, but, perhaps you'd like to see them by lamp-light," said Rose, setting open the lid of a little casket, as Della entered the chamber.

"Oh, beautiful! beautiful!" cried Della; "real diamonds; how good! how kind of papa to surprise me so!"

"And the trunks there are full of elegant clothes he had sent from England," added Rose, as much pleased as her mistress, and pointing to several beautiful letter-wood boxes and trunks.

"I'll look at them to-morrow," said Della, laughing. "These diamonds have made my eyes ache."

"Hope they won't never make your heart ache, Miss Della," said the grim old negress, who had been arranging the curtains of the bed.

"Oh! no danger of that," responded Della, lightly. "Dear me, what a splendid place this is; I only wish it was an old castle—a romantic old place, with haunted rooms, and ghosts and all that."

"Hush, hush, Miss Della; mustn't wish that," said Kian, in a low tone. "Your family is apt to be warned, as I know myself, and it isn't relishing to see specrits at any time, let 'lone the dead of night. I know what your mother thought of it—and she war warned, chile," she added, solemnly.

"Warned; pray what do you mean?" asked Della, pausing in the act of slipping her shoe from a little foot.

"Warned. I mean, chile, just what I says. De Lord he gives de fac'lty to some people, leastwise I thinks it's de Lord, 'cause your mother, honey, was a good, pious, Christian woman. Yes it's true, chile, afore she married she war warned, and afore she died she war warned, and when you's born, honey, she war warned worse dan all, that you's gwine to see lots o' trouble, anyhow!"

"Ha! now Kian, what you go to tell her that for?" cried Rose. "Miss Della, Kian very superstitious, so don't you mind her in the least."

"Sho! now, gal; better tell her not to mind me. I'll have my say!" exclaimed the old woman, almost spitefully. "I tells you some people is warned, and its well they is; it puts 'em on deir guard. And mera 'n dat, old Kian can tell ye—this very house stan's jist where old General Vooster-something lived. I never can speak the name, 'cause it's hard and a Dutch one. I tells you, honey, he was an awful man, and the place was called a chatoe, and was a grand, handsome place; I've seen it often, and they did try to get me to go there when the old general was in his last sickness; but, laws! child, I didn't dar; he was 'tirely too wicked for anybody to nuss. Well folks that did go there see sights, and they found bones in the cellar, and they knew people had been murdered there—so there was a room always haunted. It was exactly where this is, dear, and they say the windows would look red, and lighted up all night, whether anybody was at home or not. Well, 'twas an awful place, to be sure, and I a'most wondered at your father for buying it—'cause he bought the blood on it, miss, you know."

This weird story, and the weird looks of the old crone, could not but produce some effect upon the sensitive, merry-hearted girl. Rose saw that her cheeks had grown paler, and tried her best to change the subject; but Kian loved more to talk of mysteries and marvels than she did to sit in the chimney-corner in the morning, and smoke her old blackened pipe. At last her services were needed no longer, and she left the room. Rose had a couch near the bed of her young mistress, but the latter, fatigued though she was, found herself unable to sleep for hours. The whole burden of her thoughts was her mother's warnings. She was naturally fond of, and easily impressed by the marvellous.

"I wonder if I shall be warned?" she murmured, as at last her wearied eyes closed languidly, and soon she was buried in tranquil slumbers.

On the following day, as the sun shone broadly into the chamber, and the morning wind made melody in the tops of the palm-trees, Della, refreshed by her night's repose, forgot its unpleasant prelude. Strange to say, she had not dreamed of unearthly things, but of the time when she was a little child, and Manuel her only playmate.

"My little princess must prepare for visitors to-day," said her father, gayly, as he met her in the breakfast-room. "It is my reception day, and I wonder what they will say to my rose—my little English girl?"

"They will say I am very awkward and uncomfortable, I fear, when they go," said Della, blushing.

"If they do, and Manuel or I overhear it, we'll forbid them the house, won't we, sir? But I'm not afraid. There are not many such blooming cheeks in the city of Georgetown."

Della laughed and blushed at her father's praise. As to Manuel, he could scarcely eat, so intent was he upon serving and gazing upon her. If she spoke to him, every pulse thrilled an answer before his lips had fashioned it. Alas, it was deadly worship.

After breakfast, Della prepared for the expected guests. Lovely she looked when she came gliding down to gain her father's approval.

"Beautiful! beautiful!" he said. "Della, you are like your mother. But see, the carriages are coming. Ah! ha! there is our brave Lieutenant Warren; and there, too, is the governor, with his niece and nephew. How proud I shall be to present them to my daughter!"

The guests were ushered in by the liveried servants. Manuel looked on with glowing eyes, while the introductions were taking place. His jealousy made his face dark, as he noted the glance of genuine admiration, that had something more in it than surprise, with which the young lieutenant and the governor's nephew regarded her. He saw that Della was pleased with both young men, but that she preferred the handsome, sprightly lieutenant, who had evidently made up his mind to captivate the fair girl if he could. Never had his appearance been so prepossessing. His uniform was new, he had taken extraordinary pains with his toilet, and his manners were even more polished and graceful than usual. He chatted, told lively, witty anecdotes, played charmingly, sang ballads, and looked his admiration so effectually, that the color rose in Della's cheeks, and her eyes were cast down when he addressed her. Manuel, from his standpoint, saw all, and felt the acutest pangs of jealousy. He ground his teeth as he mentally compared the handsome soldier's chances with his own. The son of a noble family—a hero—having earned promotion in the war; handsome, accomplished, initiated in all the arts of social intercourse; a charming singer, and accustomed to the society of women; while he was unknown, poor, of obscure origin, and little better than a menial in reality, in spite of all the advantages he enjoyed.

"Our military friend seems to be making fine progress," said a voice near him.

It was the nephew of the governor who spoke; and presently he added—"Wait till Earl Tracy comes; if she does not yield up her present admirer, it is the first woman I have ever seen who was not flattered by the notice of a titled profligate."

This speech nettled Manuel still more, and as the other company were arriving, he ground his teeth, and hurried from the rooms. He could not bear to see even the look of admiration that another bestowed upon her. When some trifling order of Mr. St. Lemoine recalled him, what was his consternation to see Della hanging on the arm of the earl, while M. Bernard, the richest man in all the colonies, stood transfixed on the other side.

"My little girl has taken them all by storm," said St. Lemoine, laughingly. "Yes, yes," he muttered, but not so low that Manuel could not hear, "Della would well become the coronet of a countess; but I could not give her to him. Rather to M. Bernard, who with wealth unites sterling honesty."

Manuel groaned internally at this speech How he longed for the gay crowd to be gone! Yesterday, as St. Lemoine had expressed it, they had her all to themselves; to-day she had hardly spoken to, looked at him. In the presence of these men, he was a mere cipher. There was hate in his heart as he sauntered here and there, his eyes resting at all times unconsciously upon her.

"She is decidedly worth waiting for," murmured a low voice in his ear. He started as if stung. The handsome face of the lieutenant was close beside him.

"I congratulate you," he said again, with a cool, ironical smile; "but I give you warning—all is fair in war—I—shall—try—to—cut—you—out."

Manuel was livid with anger. It was not so much the words as the manner that stung him. He conquered his passionate impulse, however, and replied in the same bantering tone—

"Do your best; but I have heard of soldiers who were shot in the back."

"Ha! that hint is untimely," said the other, still smiling, "we won't talk of shooting yet awhile," and walked rapidly away.

Out into the garden hurried Manuel to cool the fever in his veins. On and on he walked, until he came to a grove of mango trees. There, leaning against the trunk of one that was covered with creeping vines, he stood with folded arms, a prey to the gloomiest thoughts.

"Oh! I assure you it seems good to be among the fruits of my own country," said a musical voice, so near that Manuel almost sprang from his resting-place. "You can't tell," continued the sweet girl, "how I longed for an orange, fresh plucked from the tree."

"And are the flowers so much more beautiful here than there?"

"Oh! yes; the English flowers are pale beside ours."

"I can testify to that; no flower there compares with one flower here," said the lieutenant who walked beside her, while the governor's nephew followed arm-in-arm with M. Bernard, and the earl sauntered with the niece of his excellency

Della looked up innocently. It was on her tongue to say, "What flower is that?" but his eye answered the question before it was asked.

"The coquette!" muttered Manuel savagely. "First one, and then the other—but that look! Yes, yes, I see she prefers *him*; but let him beware! I have not worshipped her these long years for nothing. Friend as he was to me, I hate him now."

They passed by. Manuel was hidden by the luxuriant vines, and they did not see him.

That night there was a great fête given in honor of Della's return. The beautiful girl, attired in robes of the costliest embroidery, her gleaming locks bound by a fillet of gold and diamonds, appeared more like a young and triumphant queen, receiving the homage of her subjects, than the daughter of an English planter. The rooms were thronged with the beauty and chivalry of Georgetown; the conservatory hung with lamps set in vases of alabaster, afforded a promenade wherein the senses were regaled with the richest tropical fragrance, and the eye feasted with colors whose gorgeous tinting no other climate can rival; while clusters of the most tempting fruits, oranges, lemons and pines hung or were placed within the hand's reach. Outside, the colonial band discoursed the most ravishing music. Forty-seven instruments composed the band, but it was situated at such a distance that the music sounded sweet and mellow as it reached the house.

Manuel, like a restless spirit, wandered here and there, now feeding his absorbing passion upon the peerless beauty of Della, now nursing in his heart the fire of distrust and jealousy till he was nearly driven mad. Finally, unable any longer to endure his own anguish while near the unconscious object of his love, he threw on a light cloak and hat, and started from the house with the intention of walking his disquiet away if that were possible. He passed down the mango avenue; the moon was shining with a lustre seen nowhere but in the tropical regions, and in broad waves of silver it lay across the patches of young pine-apples that bordered the estate. The palms were pencilled in deep, sharp tints against the glorious sky—a thousand strange voices sounded from the near canals and the umbrageous forests in the vicinity, while the tinkling music of a waterfall added to the charms of the night.

As Manuel moved along goaded by bewildering thoughts, he fancied, once or twice, that he heard a footfall near him, and again that he saw a shadow across the path. Presently he was aware that his steps were dogged, for a form emerged from the thick mangrove undergrowth that lined the edges of the walk, and with a guttural sound stood directly before him. He was a keen-eyed, cunning-faced Indian. His head was surmounted by a crown of beads and feathers, his neck encircled with strings of fishes' teeth, and a tattered red blanket tied by a strip of bark to his waist dangled far below his knees. His bronzed and powerful chest was bare. He was short of stature, but his manner was not without a certain dignity.

"Ah! Wa-wa-nosh!" said Manuel, recognizing a chief of the Carib tribe, who occasionally brought wild game to the Everglades, "what are you here for now?"

"Come to catch piraou," replied the Indian, in his low, peculiar voice. "Big white man want him soon; most time to catch him—most time to salt him."

"Yes, but you are out of the way; the river runs in another direction," said Manuel.

"Me hear music," said the savage; "come to see big white man's little squaw; she very good," and he ended with a grunt that denoted satisfaction.

"Then you saw her," said Manuel, his own voice softening at mention of her name.

"Ugh!" grunted the Indian, "she very good."

Manuel paused for a moment, looking steadily in the Indian's eye.

"Wa-wa-nosh," he said, sinking his voice, "have you got any fresh wourali on hand?"

"No—no good; make him soon," returned the Indian, warily. "Make him fresh! make him strong! Big poison; kill um quick. White man buy some? good for deer."

"I'll see about it," murmured Manuel, still wrapped in deep thought; "look here, Wa-wa-nosh—do you want to earn a big sum of money—two, three, six, twenty silver dollars?"

"Ugh!" grunted the Indian, and in the vivid moonlight Manuel saw the black eyes sparkle.

"Well—come here, Wa-wa-nosh—deeper in the shade. I want to tell you something."

They drew back further behind a clump of the yari-yari, or lance-wood trees, whose slender branches growing low and interlacing made a secure shade.

"Now," said Manuel, his face all aglow, "Wa-wa-nosh must listen. I have important words to speak to him."

"Ugh!" was the answer.

"You saw the big white man's pretty daughter."

The savage responded that he did.

"Well, I love her; you understand me; I love her very much, and wish to make her my wife."

"Ugh! white man want squaw go live in his tent," said the Indian.

"Yes, that is what I mean. But, Wa-wa-nosh, I am not a big man like her father. I have no house; no land; no gold; and plenty white men have, who want to marry her their wife, too—you understand?"

"Ugh! lilly boy Injun wants chief's daughter; no git her, 'cause plenty big warriors about."

"That's the very thing. But I love her; I shall die to see her marry another."

"Ugh!" said the chief, while his lip curled contemptuously, "white man have soft heart; plenty squaws."

"But I care only for her. Now I want you to steal her for me."

The Indian made an impatient movement.

"Hold, Wa-wa-nosh; let me tell you all. You shall steal us both; take us captives, you know; and I will give you great silver pieces; see, I have some now," and he jingled some loose coin before the Indian's covetous eyes.

"But what Wa-wa-nosh do?" he responded, quickly. "Big white man give Indian plenty to eat—plenty powder and shot."

"No matter—I'll give you more. Listen, Wa-wa-nosh. Your tribe tell me that there is a spot of wonderful beauty, an Indian paradise, up in the mountains, that never yet has been trodden by the white man; is it so?"

"Ugh! Manuel!" muttered the chief, pulling uneasily at his blanket. "Buck Injun have much strong water, or he no say that," he added.

"Well, never mind—they have said it. Now you Caribs know the secret entrance to this spot, where the rocks glisten with precious stones, where the birds are more gorgeous than mortal eye has ever seen, and the river runs over sands of gold. Is it not so?"

"Ugh!" responded the Indian, understanding but a part of his rhapsody, "but if white man go there, he must never come out agin."

"With her," murmured the passionate Dane, "a barren rock would be heaven to me." Then he added in a louder voice, "I am willing never to leave that garden—I never more wish to see the face of a pale-skin. There, when once the grief of leaving her friends is over, and she sees that return is impossible, she will submit to her lot. The wonders of that beautiful Manao, with its serpent-guarded entrance, its crystal wafers and beds of gold, will ultimately efface the remembrance of her home. And when she finds me all devotion, and has no other being on whom to lavish the wealth of her love, she will marry me; she will be my own; mine forever," he said exultingly.

The Indian, who evidently wondered at this long speech, changed his position with a motion indicative of weariness and a desire to end the conference. Again the tempting silver, interspersed with bits of gold, was held before his eyes.

"How does white man want me to do?" asked Wa-wa-nosh.

"Simply this," was the reply; "bring some Indians, on a day I shall set for you I will take the lady to ride; we will drive as far as the Willow-well fall. Then we will leave the fall, and follow the trail round the rocks that leads to Maconshi, in that wild pass by 'Dead Man's Rock.' Near that place you must surprise us, and bind us *both*—do you hear? then strike into the forest. The rest I leave with you; and if you carry us safely to Manoah, or Manao, as you call it, I will give you one hundred dollars in gold."

The Indian sprang forward exultingly, throwing up his arms in delight, but in a moment, composing himself, he asked,

"But what take you too, for? what for bind both?"

"So that if we should be overtaken," replied Manuel, cautiously, "big white man shall not kill me for stealing away his child."

"Ugh!" cried the Indian, sagely, "suppose he kill red man too?"

"Oh! but if we are pursued, you and your men can save yourselves, of course. You know how; but we must be found unable to move forward—captives."

"Ugh—and lose hundred dollars?" grunted the chief.

"No—you shall have the hundred dollars on the very day you capture us—you shall take them out of my pocket, you know," he said significantly.

"Good! I come to-morrow—let you know to-morrow," said the Indian, with a grim smile. And after a few more words the two parted.

Manuel walked toward the house. The band still discoursed sweet music—the feet of the dancers could be heard tripping over the marble floor.

On the moment of Manuel's entrance he caught sight of the fairy-like figure of Della. She was standing by the side of Lieutenant Warren, and her eyes were cast down while she listened; blushes brightened her cheek.

Along the glowing vistas of brilliant waltzers he looked—his brain dizzy with the sight—then drawing near, he moved by Della, purposely brushing against her dress.

She glanced up.

"Why, Manuel!" she cried, "where have you been all the evening—we have missed you?"

"Did *you* miss me?" asked the young Dane. The voice sounded singularly between his teeth, and that look of mingled fire and softness sent the blood to her heart, and back again.

"Come, Miss St. Lemoine, a new set is forming," said Lieutenant Warren, carelessly, "we shall be too late;" and before Della could reply, or give scarcely an answering look, she was hurried away with gentle violence.

"Wait," muttered the Dane, while his eyes grew lurid—"wait till the opportunity comes—and if *that* plan fails—then, look out for yourself—I have that which will drink your blood and none be the wiser."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Ever My Queen.

BY PIERCE EGAN,

AUTHOR OF "THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK," "VIOLET: OR, THE WONDER OF KINGSWOOD CHASE," "MARK JARRETT'S DAISY," ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

FISELL PROPOSES, AND IS DISPOSED OF.

Yes, sure enough, there was Fiscll a spectator of that sudden, impulsive, passionate embrace.

How long he had been there, what he had overheard, what he had witnessed, were questions which raced neck and neck through the mind of Mr. Athol, but the prudence which the moment previously he had lost sight of now forbade him putting either of these questions to the intruder.

He could only guess by the man's remarkable aspect that he had not been either an indifferent listener or spectator.

It was not so much because he stood as if trying ridiculously to imitate a wriggling serpent standing on its tail, or that his countenance generally looked as if it had newly risen up from a smash in a railway collision; it was that his features indicated an impression that he had by mistake swallowed enough poison to make a corpse of a giant, and that he did not want to die.

"Oh, woman, in our hours of ease," and at all other times, how much you have to answer for!

Here was Fiscll putting in an appearance on the hollowest of pretences at the temporary lodging of the Queen of the Workroom, and his heart full of sanguine anticipations and artifice, brimful of promises he never intended to keep—save one—and of expectations of being rewarded for his deceit by the hand and person of one of the "ravishingest gals" he had ever seen, figuratively knocked into a battered cocked hat by that young beauty's frailty.

Yes, frailty, as with gnashing teeth he said to himself. What else could it be which permitted such goings on as he had just seen with an individual who, being the son of a duke, could never be her lawful husband?

He was in a cold steam, yet his heart was on fire, and his brain was reeked with a burning pain, and all this for a young creature without friends, almost without a home. All this excruciating torture, misery, rage, despair combined in one acute agony, for a sentiment—a pretty face.

"Oh, sovereign power of love and beauty in the gentle sex, what fools you make of men brave, resolute, sagacious and clear-sighted in all other things!"

"Stop," cries the lovely and the gentle one. "Hear me, please. Oh, sovereign power of love and beauty in man, what fools you make of the fairest, loveliest, brightest angels of our sex!"

We stop there and bow our acknowledgments.

Fiscll thought not of this. A thousand red-hot pins were scratching at his heart, a blazing flame was searing his brain, and he thought of vengeance. Not on her at first—in an after time should come her punishment—but on Mr. Athol. He saw shrewdly and quickly enough where he could "plant one," as he graphically termed it, which should settle this commenced *liaison*, and he determined to plant it.

All these reflections, suspicions, and intentions in the minds of all three—for Lydia, although she had sunk down on her chair, aghast, confused, and trembling, wondered how Fiscll had got where he stood, what he had discovered, and what he would do with it—did not occupy more than a few moments, when Mr. Athol, in a stern, haughty tone, again demanded of Mr. Fiscll the cause of his intrusion. He spoke so sharply, in tones so unlike his usual quiet style, that Mr. Fiscll almost leaped in his crimson-striped socks out of his shoes.

"A border, Mr. Athol, from a Paris 'ouse—large, wanted immediately. I thought Miss Smith would do us some right off, and—"

"How dared you to think anything of the kind, sir," interposed Mr. Athol, in an indignant voice, "after my positive instructions to you, and to Miss Causey? Depart, sir; I will speak with you on my return to the office."

"But would you—" half whistled Fiscll.

"No! Begone, sir, without a word!" rejoined Mr. Athol, impetuously.

"If," urged Mr. Fiscll, huskily, "if I might suggest—"

"Depart," roared Mr. Athol, passionately, as he moved quickly toward him.

Mr. Fiscll departed down the stairs as if being kicked down them, and made his way out into the street, slamming the door behind him, grinding his teeth, clenching his fists, and making vows which, if only as a matter of language, were awful.

When assured that he was really gone, and that no one was near the room door, Mr. Athol returned to Lydia.

She was standing by the table, her face white as marble. He saw that she was about to speak to him but he stayed her.

"Do not say a word, Lydia—only hear me!" he exclaimed, in a voice which he could not help being tremulous. "I have gone farther with you than I had anticipated in coming to see you, but I feel glad to think not too far. I pray you not to interrupt, but to listen to me attentively, and with a steadfast belief in my sincerity."

He paused for a moment to take breath, and she, with downcast eyes and crossed hands upon her neck, retreated a pace or two.

Heaven knew her emotions were greater than she could bear.

"I have found," he continued, in a clearer and firmer voice, "that love is something higher, nobler, than a mere passion. I have discovered it even within the last few moments to be no toy to be taken up at will and to be discarded at pleasure. It is a conviction arrived at by no reasoning, yet strengthened by it in my case; but as irremovable as a conviction which is unassailable by argument. This is not a sentimental way of telling you, Lydia, that I love you; but it is a way which induces me to believe that the love I bear you is a manly, honorable, and enduring love. It was quickly kindled, it is true, yet the flame was small at first—a spark; then it became a star, now it is a world."

Again he paused, stopped by the intensity of his feelings.

She had grown yet whiter, and though she appeared firm, cold, and rigid when he commenced to address her, now she palpably trembled.

"It is not my intention to trade upon this disclosure," he resumed, with deep earnestness. "I have elicited from you a truth. You have formed no attachment for any man superior to the liking—nay, say good opinion—you may please to entertain of me. Is it not so?"

"It is," she replied, faintly, yet without hesitation.

"Therefore it remains for me to try and raise within your heart an affection which may in some degree approach the love I bear you. At the outset I declare that I shall seek you that you may become my wife, and under no other plea. You will leave me to settle the question, which I see is disquieting your mind, with my family. They will be made to know at what price they will retain me as a member of our house. No more of that. I will only say that in a few days I shall, I trust, be enabled to place you in a position in which, while unequivocally preserving your self-respect, you will be at liberty to accord me the opportunity I request. Now, I have one question to put to you. Will you answer it candidly and unreservedly?"

"If I can," returned Lydia, almost inarticulately, although not one word of his had escaped either her ear, her understanding, or her grateful appreciation.

"On one occasion, Mrs. Smith, your acknowledged parent, paid a visit to our establishment on a question having reference to you. I had an interview with her, and she went her way. My impression then was—my certainty now is—that she is not your mother. Am I right?"

Lydia passed her handkerchief over her brow, and moistened her parched lips She would have given a thousand worlds, had they been here, to be able to say truthfully and emphatically "She is not." But, alas! this was out of her power. Yet this feeling made her ransack her memory with an intense effort. Pressing her temples with both hands, she said, slowly—

"She has told me as long as I can remember that I must always speak of her and think of her as my mamma, yet I—I have never been able to regard her with the affection of a child. It seems unnatural, does it not?"

"Have you no memories to sustain you in that feeling?" he interrogated, quietly, yet with deep interest.

"I have no clear memory," she proceeded, thoughtfully. "Nothing to aid me, beyond the impression, of which I have never been able to divest myself, that she has been my nurse and nothing more."

"Nothing more," he repeated, quickly. "Can you recall nothing to confirm you in that supposition—nothing, no event, however slight and trivial it may seem, that leads you to remember one whom you would even wish should be nearer and dearer to you than the person who introduced herself to me as your parent?"

Lydia shook her head slowly and mournfully.

"I have at times a curious fancy floating through my brain, coming unbidden and lingering there, but uselessly and delusively," she rejoined, reflectively. "I see in imagination a beautiful apartment, although I cannot remember actually to have even entered it; it seems to be adorned with lace, pictures, mirrors, gilding and light, and then in the midst there comes floating toward me a young and beautiful face, with eyes large and lustrous, which settle on mine tenderly and sorrowfully for an instant, and then it vanishes. That is all."

"Yet it is enough for me," he responded, with quick intelligence. "There is more in that vision than you conceive; it is a memory, not a fancy, and we must endeavor to make the dream a reality. When I have succeeded in establishing in your mind a firm confidence in me—one not easily to be disturbed or shaken—I will leave nothing untried to trace Mrs. Smith's life back to an earlier date than your birth. I am convinced that I shall by that proceeding secure proofs, not only that she is not your mother, but the secret reasons which have induced her to play the part of kidnapper. I look in your face, Lydia, at the outline of your form, I have observed your mien, and these attributes of breeding which are never the developments of chance. You are no accident of birth. All great families are said to have their secrets; that you are one of those secrets I am as convinced as that I breathe, and that conviction has already—as it will in the future—determined my action in reference to you. You are still delicate, still need rest and freedom from excitement. I will not therefore further agitate you, but will take my leave with only this injunction: I pray you to remain in your present abode, I adjure you not to let any small vexations or petty annoyances urge you to a hasty step—nor, indeed, any step, without first consulting me. For the present, Lydia, farewell—and so far as your thoughts may dwell, trust to my seeming."

He rose up from his seat with a rather abrupt and rapid manner, as though he felt unable to trust himself to say more, raised her cold, trembling fingers to his lips—and before she could raise her eyes to steal a parting look at him he was gone.

Yes, he was gone; that was an event which affected her in a manner and degree she could not have thought possible. It was a consciousness, an emotion perfectly new and unimagined. She felt as though she had been conducted to a cell to undergo solitary confinement, that the door had been closed against her, and the light shut out from the barred windows, or that she had been transported to a chamber in a mausoleum from which light, life and even fragrant fresh air had been suddenly withdrawn.

Yes, he was gone, and she was alone, never before during her young life ever having felt so lone.

It was as though he had vanished, taking with him all the sunlight and whatever was bright in her existence. For a time she was bewildered, dazed, and unable to think, yet at last, and not so long first, came the sweet sense that he had confessed his love for her—he so beautiful, so noble, so manly, so exquisite an example of an apparently faultless gentleman, he whom she felt to be to her now dearer than anyone whom she had ever seen or ever known—dearer to her even than life itself, he to whom without questioning her heart or doubting the conviction which insensibly stole over her, without hesitation, wavering, misgiving, without, it might be fairly

said, being in anyway a free agent she had given her first and passionate love.

For hours she was like one in a state of ecstacy, incapable of moving, capable only of delicious thought.

It was a rude awakening for her when Miss Camoy returned and found that the pencil of Lydia had been idle, while her mind was abstracted. She was one of your far-seeing women, who are always ahead of events and motives, who can tell you what you meditate before you have begun to think, what purposes you have in your mind before you have formed them, who pervert your words and actions before you speak or move, and who favor you gratuitously with the information that you are bad in the grain, and do not sin only when you have not got the chance.

Miss Camoy knew nothing of the visit of Mr. Athol, but she had acquired enough to know that he had been, at least, much struck by Lydia's beauty, and was greatly interested in her; too much, so she chose to think. He was so singularly handsome, so gentlemanly and elegant in his demeanor, it was no feat of imagination to suppose that Lydia would form a very favorable impression of him, but according to the order of her mind she went beyond her province to assume that Lydia had been thinking of him all the day, and forming schemes and hopes which would never be realized.

"You have done nothing at all, Miss Smith," she remarked, as she gazed at the hardly commenced design. "You are not so ill as not to be able to draw a few scratches on paper. Let us understand one another at once. Don't suffer your mind to run away with ridiculous notions and absurd impossibilities. It is not my nature to mince matters. When there is a clear understanding, affairs will go on smoothly between us—that is, if you behave yourself. Now, I will be plain with you. You have been letting your brain addle itself about Mr. Athol, I can see—I know—ah, you mustn't tell me. I know better, you are a young, silly fool to do it. If you suffer your fancy to run riot about him, what will be the result? You will let him see that you are over-fond of him, crack your brain with sentiment, do anything in the world he asks you, sacrifice your life if he wished it, and all that sort of rubbish. But what is the end? I will tell you. You saw that when Mr. Athol came on board the steamboat he had a beautiful little pale-yellow rose in the buttonhole on the breast of his coat. No doubt when he took that flower up he admired it, pressed it to his lips and inhaled its fragrance, thought it beautiful—while he wore it—pressed it to his lips and inhaled its fragrance, thought it beautiful—while he wore it—but when the brief day was over he cast it away, a worthless thing to him, not even to be remembered by him. You understand me, I see. If you wish to keep yourself respectable, look out for some honest mechanic and marry him—marry him, Miss Smith—you know you can't marry Mr. Athol—take my advice—or I shall very quickly wash my hands of you, I can tell you, and you can go to your ruin your own way."

This homily had not the effect designed. Lydia, as might have been expected, attached more credence to the word of Mr. Athol than to that of Miss Camoy. Unhappily, it is the nature of her sex to do this, and in nine cases out of ten that credulity has resulted in undoing. Unfortunately, too, for the illustration, Lydia had found, on her dressing-table, on her very first introduction to it, that beautiful little tea-rose alluded to, damaged with water, but not otherwise injured. She guessed it had been laid where she found it to invite memory, and she knew how well it had succeeded in its mission, for it was a priceless treasure to her now.

She did not reply to Miss Camoy, not even by a look, but availed herself of a chance of retiring early to rest, on a plea of weakness and headache, especially as she found the tongue of Miss Camoy acrid, that allusions were hurled one after another at her which she only comprehended, inasmuch that whatever they meant they were disparaging to her.

All the next day she was quite alone; not even Lollie came to see her. She applied herself to the production of a design, and exerted all her fancy, taste, skill and delicacy of manipulation to make it surpass all her former efforts. Without admitting it to herself, she thought that during the day the room-door would glide gently open, a shadow noiselessly advance to the table, and a pair of admiring eyes—of lovely eyes—would look approvingly at her work, and the sweetest smile in the world would reward her success. She intended to look up with surprise and amazement—to appear so much astonished by the "unexpected" visit. She even went without her dinner, fearing to be caught at her frugal meal; but all these pretty little arts and arrangements were thrown away, for no one made an appearance in her chamber until Miss Camoy again returned, moody, irritable, and in every respect disagreeable. She scarcely spoke a word to Lydia, but she kept muttering reflections upon Mr. Fisell.

"Out of his mind, I believe," she mumbled. "Gone stark mad, I think. Snarls and snaps like a rabid cur and looks as if he wants physic awful. I can't bear it! I won't! I will come to the point with him to-morrow, or I'll know what's what."

Lydia understood nothing by these rhapsodies, and went to her couch, to win but little sleep, for Miss Camoy had unhinged her thoughts and hopes, and it had more than dawned upon her that to cherish a love for Mr. Athol would be to cherish a hopeless passion. But she was enlightened with respect to Miss Camoy's rhapsodies, and that when she least anticipated it.

The following morning she was again alone, after Miss Camoy had taken a breakfast which ought to have fortified her for some intended battle, if it did not, and had gone to business. She was bending over her drawing, and still striving to excel in every line and touch, when she heard the handle of the door gently move. Her heart leaped to her lips, and as the sound of the cautiously-opening door caught her intensely active ear, she said to herself, with a delirious feeling of joy—

"I knew he would come."

But she did not look up—not when she heard the shuffle of a step on the carpet, creeping, as it were, surreptitiously toward her.

Only as a sign of life and consciousness a beautiful pink tinted her cheeks and forehead.

She thought, innocently as a girl of seven, to be artful—to pretend that she had not heard the footstep at the door, nor the tip-toe coming to surprise her. She intended to express surprise; to be so much amazed when compelled to discover that, instead of being alone, *he* was by her side.

But it was her lot to be so much astonished in reality.

She heard a slight cough—that she expected; but it grated somewhat on her ear, for instead of being musical and silvery, it sounded like a strong rasp on a stale and much-burnt roll.

Then she looked up rather stealthily, and beheld, to her unqualified wonder, Mr. Fisell.

It was not perhaps that she was so much startled by this unexpected visit as she was by Mr. Fisell's aspect. To say that he was woe-begone would but faintly describe the misery depicted on his countenance. His face, which looked as if composed of pieces, as in a puzzle, and at the best of times had been put together by an inexpert, now appeared to have had a rattle as though he had stepped down an unexpected additional stair, and had jarred the parts out of place. It seemed impossible to gaze for a minute steadfastly at him without dizziness; and for the instant, perplexed as Lydia felt at seeing him before her, she thought he had slipped under a cart-wheel in the street, and it had gone over his face.

His eyes, unevenly ranged, however, sparkled with a curious fire, which betokened passionate adoration, mingled with fury, ferocity and malignity; and he glared at her as though he were a jaguar which had just made its escape in a state of starvation from some entangled fastness, and was raging for a meal.

She rose up with a startled look, and unconsciously ejaculated his name.

He gasped and gurgled for a moment, and tried to smile pleasantly, but it was too much for him, and it only petrified her. Throwing forward his hands in a patting kind of way, he exclaimed, hoarsely:

"Sit down, Miss Smith—sit down and 'ear me. Sit down and listen, for I've much to say. In your weak condition it would wear you out to 'ear hall standing; and I must tell you hall, for my 'art is bustin'. Sit down."

Lydia's brow fell, and her heart sank, too, as she resumed her seat.

It would be idle to say she had no notion of what was coming. A very innocent and artless girl will detect a coming proposal, even before it trembles on the lips, unless, indeed, the *parti* is wholly unthought of in that way and startlingly abrupt in the offer. She instinctively bent over her drawing. She commenced to use her pencil, as though he had only interrupted her employment instead of her train of thought.

He coughed and hemmed, and made violent exertions to clear his granulated throat and moisten his parched lips and tongue. Presently he burst forth—

"You knew me in a hinstant. I take that as a joyful homen. At the 'ouse they say I am not myself—I am somebody else, I'm so haltered. Haltered! 'Eaven knows I'm haltered indeed, yet you knew me at once, and said, 'Mr. Fisell!' as if you had seen no change in me. No change! Oh, great Jupiter! but there is change in me, Miss Smith—as if I were all in threepenny-bits instead of a sovereign. I'm no longer a sovereign, but all pieces, and you—you, Miss Smith, whom I adore with a passionate affection which is driving me into insanery, can by one word make me a 'ole golden coin again."

Lydia rose up and stood erect; her long eyelashes rested on her cheek, her complexion was white as alabaster, and her features as rigid as if they were sculptured in marble.

"Mr. Fisell," she exclaimed, with her voice slightly raised, and very firm in its tone, "I suppose that you have come to me on business of the firm. I must request you to confine yourself to it; I cannot listen to your communications on any other topic."

"No, I do not come here on the business of the firm, Miss Smith," he instantly returned, guttorally, "but on business of the 'art. You've won mine as if you'd by extraornary luck drawed a prize in a lottery, the highest prize right bang off. Yes, you've won me right off. I had intended to let you fish for me, and I'd a nibbled an' nibbled and nibbled at your bait; but I find that I've bolted it at once, gorged it 'ook and all, and you have landed me."

"Mr. Fisell, I beg of you—" interposed Lydia, with reddening cheeks and glistening eyes, but in vain; he went on vehemently—

"Landed me, basketed me—I'm your roach, your dace, your tench, your barbel—your Jack—oh, your Jack—my name is John. I've a good position in our 'ouse, looked up to, respected, and down for a rise. I've fifty pounds in the Post Office savings bank, and we shall be able to get along like a street on fire. I will take a handsome first floor to start with—"

"I will listen to you no longer, Mr. Fisell," she again interposed, angrily, and shocked at his wild manner. "I insist on your quitting me."

"Never—never until I have your consent to be mine," he cried, almost vociferously.

Then he sprang at her, so that she retreated with a faint scream, and he fell at her knees, clutching her dress tightly while he went on hurriedly and frantically.

"I love you—Athol don't. I'll marry you—Athol won't. I'll make a respectable married woman of you. Athol will make you a hobject, ruined and despised. Have me, oh, have me! I love you with my 'ole 'art an' soul. Be mine—say yes! Be Mrs. Fisell, darling, darling Miss Smith. Darling Lyddy, make me your own, own John Fisell."

Then came an intervening cloud, a screeching, a clamoring, a battling. Lydia fell back, frightened out of her life. Fisell and a woman rolled, twisted, spun round, struggling and wrestling all round the room, out of the door together, down the stairs thump, bump, bang, and then the street door below closed with a crash.

Before she could recover her breath even to surmise the meaning of this intervention, and who it was who had intervened, she beheld Miss Camoy in a very dilapidated condition, her hair hanging about her neck and over her face and eyes, within a few feet of her, thrusting in her face her bonnet and her mantle.

The woman's face was of tallowy whiteness, and her eyes gleamed like a cat's in the dark. The expression on her features was vicious to an indescribable degree, and it seemed as though only consideration of and respect for the law prevented her going through a similar performance with Lydia to that which had enabled her to dispose of Fisell.

"You shameless hussy," she gasped between her thin, dried, trembling lips. "You unscrupulous, wicked creature, leave my apartments—respectable enough until you defiled them with your infamous presence—"

"How dare you, woman, apply these monstrous calumnies to me?" interrupted Lydia, with extreme indignation.

"How dare I?" shrieked the infuriated creature. "Can't I believe my own eyes? Be off; pack off this instant, beggar, or I'll rend all the rags off your back, and thrust you into the streets in tatters, for the people to see how vile a thing you are."

The woman looked so like a maniac, so far beyond the power of listening to reason, so much as if she would put her threat into execution, that Lydia, stunned, bewildered, affrighted, took the offered habiliments and hurried them on, she knew not how, left the room, and descended the stairs, Miss Camoy, shrieking and shaking her fists at her, following her close up to the threshold. She went out into the street, and she heard the door close behind her with a loud noise.

She moved away with a quick step, unknowing, heedless whither she went, save that she had a distracting sense of rushing out into a vast, blank, desolate space—a world without hope.

As with pallid face and wild mien she pressed onward, she passed one who, with a suppressed cry, recognized those marvellously and delicately beautiful features. He stopped abruptly, then turned and followed her with a stealthy step, but with as keen a tenacity as a panther would follow the track of an intended victim.

It was the Indian officer, who had been saved from the clutches of the Marquis of St. Leonards only to be again hurled at the teeth of death by the foreign iron-clad.

CHAPTER XX.

ACROSS THE STEPPING-STONES ONCE MORE.

The Marquis of St. Leonards did not forget the appointment he had made with the woman Sydney, born Anne Marchmont. Naturally of a good constitution, hardened by his devotion to field-sports, comprised in the chase, the preserves and the turf, he recovered his immersion in the Thames quickly enough, and would have been well but for his mental disturbance. That kept him, as it were, sickly, weak and irritable. He wanted an assurance that, terrible as the result he desired to arrive at would be, it would at least be an end to the series of events which had blighted his inner life.

If he could be assured that his wife were really dead—if it could be proved to him beyond the shadow of a dispute that the child of his wife were dead—he should be comparatively at ease. He might feel—he knew that in a degree that knowledge would be a canker in his heart, but he would be, in a way, at peace. He would be able to mix in the world freely—wildly, if it so pleased him—without the danger of coming in contact with a face which agonized him to look upon and maddened him to remember.

So he resolved to hunt the uncertainty down to its death in one form or another, and none the less anxious was he to do this in consequence of a note received from his friend the major, which ran thus:—

"*Pushed inquiries to a stand-still. Three or four girls said to be drowned; names—R. Tudge, S. Pennikett, A. Maxwell, A. Best and L. Smith. Bodies have not been recovered. Understand your Bengal tiger escaped—the grill is not, I suppose, ready for him yet.*"

The marquis crumpled the note tightly in his hand.

"The name of Sydney is not there," he muttered, agitatedly. "My work is still to do—all—all! I would that the memory of that face did not so tug at my heart-strings; but I must be firm—it will not do to play the fool now."

He made a few preparations, and confiding to his valet only—who, indeed, accompanied him—whither he was going, he set out for Hastingleigh Court, to keep his appointment with the woman Sydney.

He arrived the day previously at the great house unexpectedly, for he had given no notice of his intention to visit it; but on his arrival he gave strict injunctions that his presence there should be kept unknown.

A chamber was hastily prepared for him, and he determined to seclude himself in it; but he found on trying to do so he could not rest within it, for from the window he could see the winding river and the Stepping-Stones.

The day was clear, the moon large and golden, the waters flowed smoothly onward as they had been flowing Heaven alone knows how many centuries. Everything around and near it looked calm, tranquil, peaceful—except the Stepping-Stones.

He could see at their bases fringes of glittering silver, where the restless waters leaped, and laved, and danced with a kind of glee which to him seemed impish and devilish.

And there was a curious moan of the wind, which sighed in the angle of the wing in which his apartment was situated, and among the umbrageous foliage in the park, supplying weird music to the fantastic gambols of the unquiet wavelets.

He paced his room and tried not to look in their direction, but he could not shut out the memories they thrust into his brain, nor could he deafen his ears to imaginary voices, which suggested to him to cross those Stepping-Stones once again now in the quiet eventide, and visit alone that place in which he believed he had shot down to the death his mortal and never-to-be-forgiven enemy.

This strange impulse he strove to resist, but in vain, and eventually yielding to a secret power which became incontrollable, he muffled himself in a cloak, and stole quietly and unobserved, by a way sacred to himself, out of the house, and hurried across the park.

On arriving at the brink of the river, he saw the chain of stones stretching across the bed of the river as he had seen them many a time and oft; but they looked not to him as they had in old and happier times, especially on one occasion, at just such an hour and beneath such a sky, when he had crossed them with his fair young wife clinging to him for support, and bearing in his arms his first-born, which he had taken from the nurse in order himself to convey it across the river, so that the shadow of danger might not approach it.

Now, he remembered with a shudder that he had come to wish for its death as an immeasurable boon.

The waters bubbled and gurgled, and seemed to be animated with an elfish gladness at his approach—at least he thought so, and he shrank back from them.

But unseen hands pressed on his shoulders, and soundless voices with fiendish laughter cried to him—

"Go on, go on! The man you wrestled with in the deep waters was a mere blance, not a reality. Your man is up there beneath the underwood—rotting—rotting—rotting! Go on; you will find a rag or two of cloth, and a skeleton—a grim, bony skeleton. Go on. *He awaits your coming!*"

Gasping for breath, cold as ice, the marquis, unable to resist these strange urgings, placed his foot on the first stone, and began to cross.

He looked askance at the deepest, broadest pool, which lay still and unruffled a few feet beyond the stones, and almost in the centre of the river.

He shuddered, and for an instant closed his eyes.

"It was there she perished," he moaned, in acute agony. "There—there! and with her all that was worth cherishing in my heart—all!"

But almost instantly he opened his eyes wide, and ejaculated aloud—

"If it were she?"

He drew a deep breath, and gazed again at the pool, which naturally enough had a weird like fascination, attracting his eyes irresistibly.

Then a sigh broke from him.

"Poor Lyddy," he muttered. "If even it were you, it cannot fail to draw from me a pang of regret—and a curse."

At this moment a ray of moonlight, interpenetrating a bough of a tree standing on the ridge above, forced its way through an interstice, and settled on the breast of the pool.

He started and nearly fell backward, it so much resembled a ghastly human face floating there, dead.

A slight cry of horror escaped his lips, and he went on tottering and slipping with unsteady steps, for with this startling coincidence came to him the memory of his own passage over those dangerous stones on that dread night, when the wind howled and blew fiercely, the rain-storm pelted down on him, the thunder roared and deafened him, and the blue lightning lighted his progress every dozen yards with a hideous glare.

But he crossed without mishap, and commenced to ascend the ridge to the copse above. No sound greeted his ears but the rustle of foliage by a gentle wind. No sight crossed his eyes but the stark stems and rugged mounds of grassy banks, or a wheeling bat which flew circling past him.

And now he gained the well-known entrance to the copse in which he had seen his wife in loving talk with a man until then unknown to him.

It seemed as if the very sight of this but too-well-remembered spot brought back all the worst and most malignant feelings in his nature. His regretful pangs, his remorse—for his sorrow had something of that shape—vanished, and he became almost frantic with fury.

"If I had him here but once again," he grated through his gnashing teeth. "Once within my grip he should not this time escape my vengeance. He, whom I had in no way wronged, when he fastened upon me the worst injury one man can inflict upon another. If I could but meet him here, on this spot, I would not part from him until I had crushed the life out of him or he took mine."

He gazed around him at first with something of the manner of a maniac, but the dread stillness which prevailed subdued him, and even made his nerves thrill with awe. Not a leaf moved, and there was a lull in the light breeze which had moaned mournfully through the foliage above and around him.

"It was here I saw her for the last time," he muttered, savagely. "Frail wanton." He breathed a curse and went on. "Here he fell, I could swear it. Yet, what if I have been mistaken? The man I seized had greatly changed from him I shot down here. If I have deceived myself, and should find his bones rotting here, how I would spurn them with my foot."

He moved slowly forward, impelled by a horrible fascination, expecting, even against his recent recollections, to find beneath the underwood a mouldering carcase; but although he bent down and peered, and groped with a stick he carried, he found nothing to reward his search. He persevered but in vain.

At length he turned to see by the bearings of recognizable objects whether he was seeking in the right direction, when to his horrified amazement he beheld the form of a woman standing in the gap by which he had penetrated into the copse.

Her dress was of a gray and dusky hue, and nun-like in its character, and in the cold, pale moonlight had a supernatural appearance. Especially spectral and ghostly was the face on which the bright white moonbeams fell.

He stood transfixed and powerless to move. He did not doubt he was looking on an apparition, and he did not either doubt that it bore the face of his wife, much as he had seen it last, save that it had the pallor and worn look which pain and suffering give to the human countenance.

He was no coward, and his belief in the supernatural was weak, rather than otherwise; but there was enough in this appearance to stagger his senses, and to convert him into a block of ice.

He remained for a minute motionless, and then immediately covered his eyes with his hands.

He heard his name breathed in a plaintive tone, and he remembered the voice. He tore his hands away and looked again, but the spectre was no longer there.

Had his senses deceived him, had some conformation of trees and foliage in the pale blue misty moonbeams deceived him and fooled his imagination?

He rushed to the opening, but there was no trace of any one visible. He pursued the path until he came upon the rugged ridge, but within the limits of his sight he was alone with the trees and briary clumps and bushes.

He wiped some cold moisture from his forehead.

"It must have been a hideous phantasy of the brain," he thought.

Hark!

Were his ears deceiving him? The light beat of retreating feet came up to him with the gentle murmuring of a rising breeze. He listened with a throbbing heart.

It was so; there was a faint crushing of dead leaves, the cracking of small twigs. Some one was hurrying away from the spot on which he was standing.

Who?

There was an answer flung back to his brain, as though it had been a missile hurled at it.

"If it should be she, and alive, and I can assure myself of it, it will be of vital importance to me," he muttered through his swelling throat.

He hurried at once forward with a stealthy step until he reached a verge of the ridge which commanded some portions of the spiral path on its sinuous way to the river. Down this he peered anxiously, but could see nothing.

He listened intently, standing motionless, and suspending his breath. Again he caught the light sound of feet upon the grass, as a cool breath of air played on his burning temples, and he watched eagerly with starting eyes.

Was it a woman's step, or only that of a stray fawn which had wandered from the park?

"No, by Heaven! it is she!" he gasped, as from a screen of scrubby briars and undergrowth he saw emerge that dusky phantom form, flee along the grassy pathway, and sink again into a winding alley abruptly declining to the river banks.

"She is making for the Stepping-Stones," he murmured, with intense excitement. "I will follow her—intercept her—speak with her! I will know the worst—how far she can continue to be the withering blight on my life!"

He hastened with a quick step down the winding, slippery path, followed, as he believed, the correct route, easy as it was, and partly obscured in some places by overarching trees; but to his mortification, he found himself on a kind of *plateau* overhanging the river, and affording no practicable means of descent.

But from this spot he had an uninterrupted view of the Stepping-Stones.

He saw their long, uneven patch-line, formed of blocks of stone, varying in size from huge masses to small bowlders. He saw the dancing, leaping, silver-sparkling wavelets fringing them, and he pressed his closed hand on his heart.

"And I believed that she perished there," he grated, between his teeth. "Would to God she had, for having so basely, so cruelly wronged me!"

While these words were trembling on his lips, the dusky, nun-like form he had seen at the entrance to the copse, abruptly appeared on the first of the chain of stones in the river within his view.

With startling eyes he watched her glide across the dangerous track until she gained the very centre, within a few feet of the Earl's Pool, and then she paused and turned her head toward it.

"The dead body was found there," he thought, with a sickening faintness.

The phantom figure changed her position suddenly, and turned her face upward, direct, as it seemed to him, as though she were gazing straight at him, with a terrible questioning in her eyes.

The moonbeams played brightly on her face, making it appear supernaturally white; but though the distance between them rendered her features scarcely visible, they were not unrecognizable to his straining eyes.

A moment more and she again changed her position, resumed her progress, and, like one affrighted by a pursuing enemy, hurried with great swiftness across the difficult channel until she gained the opposite side.

"I cannot be deceived," he cried, with a feeling of suffocation. "It must be she, and, after all, my revenge is yet to be appeased. I have been tracked from first to last. I will overtake her, and wring a confession from her. Then—then—"

Ah, then! That was a secret in the future yet hidden from him, and he, like others, had to learn how easy it is to propose—how very difficult to dispose.

He retraced his steps, and quickly found the path he had unconsciously and erroneously quitted, darted down it as rapidly as the difficulties of the descent would admit, and gained the Stepping Stones.

But there was no sign visible of the object of his pursuit.

Nevertheless, he made his way across the stones, as he intended, with as much rapidity as he could; but the water, as he hurried onward, seemed to make him dizzy and nervous.

At least, one of the two women had been drowned there. Even were it proved to him beyond a doubt that poor Lyddy Marchmont had been the unhappy victim of the storm, she had been no less the victim of his selfish passion.

There was to him a horrible fascination in that large patch of still, deep water, and he could not help pausing there, even as he had seen that spectral woman do. He gazed at it with staring eyes, and shivered as he beheld some white bubbles rise up to the surface in one particular part.

It was as though they were marking the spot where a body had sank, and was about slowly to rise to the surface, so that he might look upon the white face, see the lips part, and hear a voice, which once he had thought sweet, murmur—

"And this is your work!"

He groaned, swayed, staggered, tottered, and fled over the stones he knew not how. He ran wildly across the park to his silent mansion, standing grim and stark, in some parts bright and vivid, in others plunged into impenetrable black shadow. Into the deep shadow he plunged and gained his room, threw himself upon a couch, and lay trembling and cowering as though he had been confronted by the spectre of the unhappy girl whose happiness he had blighted, whose mind he had ruined, and whose life, in fact, he had to answer for.

Withal it was impossible for matters to rest where they stood, and after a night of torture, he met the broad daylight with a stern resolution to face his ghastly trouble, and to go on to the end with the plan he had formed.

As the turret clock of Hastingleigh Court chimed the hour of nine, he was standing by the river's brink, and a few paces from the Stepping-Stones, and in the gloom of a clump of trees at no great distance, he suddenly perceived a figure that a moment before had not been visible there.

He saw it with the sensation of receiving a blow on his heart; but another glance told him it was the form of the woman born Anne Marchmont.

He moved at once toward her, and in an undertone, said—

"You are punctual."

"I keep *my* word," she responded, with a sarcastic emphasis.

He waved his hand haughtily.

"To the eye, perhaps," he responded. "But I have yet to prove that you do so in spirit."

"Oh, never fear. Keep your promise to pay me like a nobleman, and you shall have the information I know you so much desire."

"Lead on," he responded, coldly.

She turned, and struck into a plantation, and took a path which led through the wood toward a village built on its outskirts.

He followed her in silence until she turned suddenly into a narrow track leading into a different direction, and then when she had gained an alley plunged, by overarching trees, into almost pitchy darkness, he stopped and said, abruptly and hoarsely—

"Woman—Marchmont, one word: and as you value the reward you seek from me, answer me truly."

"Speak," was the answer.

"That—that child entrusted to your keeping—"

"Well?"

"You adopted the name of Sydney, and it bore that name?"

"Well?"

"I—I have obtained a list of those who perished in that steamboat accident. I do not find in it the name of Sydney."

"I changed, by my second marriage, my name, and took my husband's—it was Smith. That child after that signed herself L. Smith."

She heard a spasmodic moan, and she bent her steel-like eyes upon him, but it was dark, and, as he had designed, she could not see the indescribable agony depicted on his features.

But she heard a short passionate burst of tears, and her blood seemed to freeze in her veins.

In a hard, shrill tone she said—

"Did you shed such tears for my sister Lydia?"

His eyes were as dry as dust again.

"She is not dead!" he exclaimed, in a cold, hard voice, which had something stinging in its irony.

She started.

"No," she muttered, with embarrassment, but at the same time malevolently.

They went on, and at length they came upon a mere hut in a small dell. A light was twinkling through the dim panes of a narrow window, and his companion hastily peering through them made for the door before which she paused, beckoning him to follow her.

He strode up to her, and pointing to the miserable tenement, said with a peculiar emphasis, but in a whisper—

"Does *she* dwell here?"

"Aye!" was the answer, followed by a low, grating laugh. "You shall see her, Lord St. Leonards, you shall have the opportunity of gazing upon the wreck you have made of one whose unhappy fate it was in the bright beauty of her blossoming to come between the wind and your nobility."

As she concluded she knocked sharply at the cottage door. No answer was returned, and she raised the latch, pushed open the door, and entered.

The Marquis of St Leonards drew a deep breath, and then assuming a stern demeanor, followed her within.

(*To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 35.*)

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ A Springfield boy, five years of age, was knocked down by a rooster, a day or two ago, and had his revenge at the dinner-table the next day.

☞ A Michigan farmer has written to Mr. Bergh to know if folding doors in hog pens will be the fashion this summer.

☞ Not only is Barnum's cannibal on a strike, but his new gorilla is giving Paineas considerable trouble, because the great showman insists that the animal must not swear when fleas bite him, especially if ministers or their families are standing in front of the cage.

☞ The pale, sad-looking young men whom one occasionally meets in the street are not consumptive, are not mourning the loss of a friend, and are not divinity students. They are breaking-in tight boots.

☞ A Tennessee man wrote his will on a paper collar, and it passed through probate as well as any other will, though a little unhandy about filing.

☞ A young man at Kenosha bet two dollars that he could take a certain man's nose between his thumb and finger. Although the said certain man was a church deacon, the said young man's doctor's bill was fourteen dollars.

☞ Fashionable ladies in Chicago never allude to their canine pets as "Spits" dogs, but call them expectorating pups.

☞ Fort Smith, Arkansas, has a woman blacksmith, who can throw a mule and shoe him in fifteen minutes by the clock.

☞ It was a very ungrateful fellow who sent by carrier-pigeon the following message to his place in the country: "Send basket of early green peas by express train; pack the bearer of this in with them, as he is a plump bird, and I intend to eat him with them."

☞ A St. Louis girl signalled a train with her parasol and prevented an accident. She was rewarded with a free-pass by the company, and realized two dollars extra profit on the sunshade.

☞ A woman six feet four inches high strides about Burlington, Iowa.

☞ There are people in the world who esteem it so extremely vulgar to express emotion, that if an earthquake were reported to have happened in their neighborhood, they would consider it a proof of their good breeding not to have been moved by it.

☞ The Louisville Journal, in speaking of Captain Jack, says:—"His ideas in regard to back pay are uncertain, but he has a way of going for an adversary's back hair which is unpleasant, to say the least of it."

☞ Danbury, although respectable, is poor, and has no base-ball club, and consequently a citizen of that village was compelled to fall from a stoop the other day in order to break his thumb.

☞ The rats in Webster City grow larger than cats, and it is said one blow from a rat's tail will split a cellar door.

☞ So many alligators are being sent North by mail from Florida, that the P. O. Department talk of putting on special alligator-cars during the spring months.

☞ All the Smiths who go to Europe this summer will come home Smythes, Thompsons will omit the "p," and Bakers will style themselves Becairs.

☞ A New Orleans child, whose death had been formally certified by the family physician, was frightened out of its coffin by a clap of thunder last week, just as the hearse drove up to the door.

☞ A New Hampshire man has the leather strap which has thrashed the family through three generations.

☞ A worthy Kentucky farmer being asked if a daughter, recently married, was still living with him, replied:—"No, sir! When one of my gals swarms, she must hunt her own hive."

☞ Fastened to the shield of a defunct Comanche chief, which is on exhibition at Dallas, Texas, is a woman's scalp with very long and beautiful hair.

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ANNOUNCEMENT.

In response to the urgent requests of many readers for some of the fine stories previously published in THE POST, we shall begin, in this number, the republication of that strange and fascinating novellette,

MANUEL THE DANE.

A STORY OF THE TROPICS.

It has been just thirteen years since this romance made its first appearance in the columns of THE POST, and from the attention it excited at that time, we are confident we could not offer a better story to our readers. To very many on the increasing list of THE POST, it will of course be entirely new.

ATLANTIC CITY.

Every now and then at this season of the year, a day comes which makes us poor dwellers in the cities think of the open country with its wealth of green, of lofty hills and their nestling valleys, and—perhaps more than all—of the magnificent expanse of ocean, and the restless waves sliding up and down its sandy shore.

And then we think what a blessing it is that in this day of railroads the seaside has been brought so near to us, that in a few hours we can roll down to the cool, wet beaches, and inhale the salt perfume of the wild sea waves.

Whatever special inducements other ocean resorts may offer, Atlantic City must always retain this important advantage as a place of resort, so far as Philadelphia is concerned—its nearness to us. And this to thousands of our business men, and tens of thousands of our busy artisans, is a matter of great importance indeed. This enables the former to buy or rent cottages for their families, while they go up and down daily to their business; and enables the latter to steal a day occasionally, and make a joyful visit to the sea which shall sweeten the drudgery of many a week of toil.

We are glad to hear, therefore, that our friends of the Camden and Atlantic Railroad are getting everything into good trim to accommodate the travelling public, whether they wish to go singly, or in excursion parties; and that the dwellers in the City by the Sea are putting their hotels and cottages in order, to welcome the expected guests. The latter claim to have ten miles of good and safe bathing—and one mile will accommodate a good many people. We trust to hear also that arrangements have been made at the principal bathing-grounds to have a boat constantly afloat and on the watch, during the regular hours for bathing, in order that no serious accident may mar the enjoyment of the season.

A LITTLE PIECE OF ADVICE TO ALL WHO WRITE LETTERS.—Always put at the head of your letter your full address—town, county, state, and, if living in a large city, the street and number.

We say put the full address *always*—at the head of every letter you write—especially if you live in a city. Your friend may be in the habit of writing frequently, and yet may not be able to remember with certainty your exact street and number; and the time he has to devote to hunting up these necessary facts, is time wasted on account of your carelessness or stupidity. And if he is a man whose time is fully employed, your failure to do so necessary a thing does not raise you in his estimation.

☞ ANXIOUS OVERMUCH.—Perhaps we may rightly say that the most miserable people in the world are the very careful ones. You who are so anxious about what shall happen on the morrow that you cannot enjoy the pleasures of to-day; you who have such a peculiar cast of mind that you suspect every star to be a comet, and imagine that there must be a volcano in every grassy mead; you who are more attracted by the spots in the sun than by the sun himself, and more amazed by one sear leaf upon the tree, than by the verdure of the woods! you who make more of your troubles than you could do of your joys—you belong to the most miserable of men.

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

THE CINCINNATI MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

We were never so puffed up with pride over anything in our lives as we are over that Festival. We strut about like Prussians at the close of Bismarck's war. We don't tickle ourselves so much even over our great overgrown yearly Exposition as over this May Festival. To put it short, we think we have done it now.

We know we are a little slow in some things. We confess that our leading business men are either too lazy or too dignified to advertise, or otherwise make any noise in the world. With a proper sense of humiliation we own up to it, that the only celebrated article of Cincinnati manufacture in these latter days is, alas!—Cincinnati beer. We know in our hearts that, in all matters of business enterprise, we are at least fifty years behind either St. Louis or Chicago. Likewise we feel in our bones that all the world is ahead of us in the matter of railroads and those things. But Chicago or St. Louis can't project and accomplish a Grand Classical Musical Festival. WE CAN. Put it in capitals, Mr. Printer.

The managers began the Festival with many misgivings that it would be a pecuniary loss. To begin on, the weather we had would have disheartened Napoleon crossing the Alps. The Cincinnati Commercial describes the weather with two master-strokes of creative genius: "After the rain, more rain. And after the repetition, showery freaks, with lightning, thunder and hail." That was how it was, the whole week long.

Theodore Thomas, the Great Leader, was the Napoleon of our Festival. He brought a few prominent men of his band, and these, with our own entire Cincinnati orchestra, of which we are proud, and don't deny it, made up that part of the performers. There were six solo singers; a huge vocal chorus, numbering from five to seven hundred singers; and finally a grand organ, built here in Cincinnati, expressly for this occasion. Of this organ, we modestly say that it isn't as large as the big Boston organ, to be sure, but on the other hand it makes up by having this, that, and the other good thing which the big Boston organ hasn't. I myself don't admire our Cincinnati organ a bit. But that's nothing. To my uncultivated ears it conveys a powerful suspicion of a tin-pan serenade, but again that's nothing. Those four elements, orchestra, soloists, big organ, monster chorus, made up our festival. The seven hundred chorus singers were all from Ohio musical societies, except just two companies, one from Titusville, Pa., another from Indiana.

The Festival was held in Exposition Hall, of course, where, as I told you before, they hold everything which is a little bigger than all out-doors. The huge chorus of singers were ranged in rows of seats one above another, on a sort of steep incline. There were so many of them that the top ones were too far away for their features to be distinguished plainly, reminding you of the dim vista which the poets talk about. They looked like a gigantic pyramid of marble cake set out before our admiring eyes. The ladies were down in front with their variegated dresses, the gentlemen modestly taking the back seat. The lady part of the grand chorus covered itself with glory. The great Theodore Thomas condescended to say that it was perhaps the finest chorus he had ever heard. They had had more time for training than the gentlemen, probably. It was pleasant to see that there were both old ladies and gentlemen here and there through the chorus. It is as delightful as it is rare to find people keeping themselves bright and young in their old days. But the ladies of this chorus didn't look a bit pretty, truth compels me to say; and I would like to be permitted to remark on general principles, that I wish to goodness women wouldn't fix themselves up so everlasting fussy-looking, when they think they want to look nice. I adore bright colors, but it always makes me feel sorry to see half a dozen of 'em piled upon one little lady. I don't admire that sort of rag-bag adornment. The lady whose dress gave the pleasantest effect to our eyes at the Festival, wore a handsome plain black or white dress, I forget which now, with just some rosebuds and green leaves at her throat. But the women mostly looked like a frizzly chicken running against the wind. And many of them looked as cross and spiteful as could be, just as though each woman was desperately afraid some other woman was prettier than herself. You could see by the way they kept primping that they thought more of their clothes than they did of their music, forgetful that it was the music the audience were after, not the dressing.

It seems to me that our own American Anna Louise Cary is just the sweetest singer mortal ears can listen to. She filled the great Exposition Hall, with its audience of over seven thousand persons, perfectly. Her magnificent, rich voice seemed to roll out of her throat of itself, to the very farthest corners of the hall, seemingly without the least effort on her part. Some of the other soloists strained themselves till they were red in the face, and their eyes popped up—Miss Cary stood there cool and smiling as moonlight on the lake, and just let the glorious, sweet music come of itself. Then among the soloists there was Mrs. H. M. Smith, of New York, late of Boston, another native American lady, with a soprano voice, remarkably sweet and clear on the upper notes. It really does seem at last as though America won't forever have to keep on importing singers with long-tailed foreign names, to make her music for her. And I haven't space to write more of the other soloists, Mr. Whitney, the admirable basso, and the rest.

The music performed wasn't of the negro minstrel kind, I assure you. It was all difficult, classical music, selections from the renowned old composers, Mozart, Schumann, Beethoven, and those. Musical people think that a brighter era for music is dawning in America, lately. It may be so, and maybe the Americans, when the German blood is sufficiently diffused through the country, will come out to be a musical people at last. Who knows?

Among the selections at our Festival were scenes from Mozart's "Magic Flute," except the Requiem, "the last production of his inspired brain." Part of the "Magic Flute" came to the great composer one day when he was playing billiards,—I read somewhere,—and he hummed it over to himself, and noted it down in the billiard room, and it afterward came before the world as one of the most beautiful portions of the weird, wonderful "Magic Flute." There is a wild sweetness about it which is melancholy enough to make you cry, in some passages.

But the event of the Festival was undoubtedly the performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the most difficult, gigantic musical creation ever accomplished by the mind of man. At the time it was written the great master had been more than twenty years entirely deaf, and could not himself hear a note of the mighty creation his magic hand had conjured out of the chaos of sound. But once before in America has the Ninth Symphony been attempted and rendered successfully. That was at New York, some time ago, also by Theodore Thomas, the Indomitable. That it was also successfully given here in Cincinnati is something to rejoice over, and also something to spur all America to nobler effort in the direction of classical music.

So the festival is ended, and it was successful. Most of the musicians have subsided once more into private life, and chorus, soloists, and all, like Schumann's Gypsies whom they sung about so exquisitely, have vanished:

"The merle tramp is heard through the grey, misty air,—
Away ride the gypsies,—but who can tell where?"

ZIG.

MY MURIEL.

BY GORDON CAMPBELL.

The gloaming's reddening light lies low
Upon the woodland wave and sedge,
And cool winds from the hill-side blow,
And passing whisper to the trees.
Yet is not this an other day—
My love, I will the meaning tell;
What say the seas and woodland ways,
To thee, my Muriel?

Love's day is o'er, love's sun is set,
But as the sunset gleams enfold,
For sweet love lingers with us yet.
Love's sunset changing all to gold;
For suns must set, and love must die,
And lips, not hearts, must say, "'Tis well,"
And hearts must bid a long good-bye,
My sweet, sweet Muriel.

In golden aftertime forget
The one who loved, asked all, and lost;
Forget me, love, sweet love, and yet
Canst thou forget how dear thou wast?
Farewell! farewell! it must be said,
Though my fond heart should break—farewell!
Forget me, think my love is dead,
As thine is, Muriel.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

THOROUGHNESS.

Miss Nightingale tells her sisters in work, "If you are called to man's work, do not exact a woman's privilege—the privilege of inaccuracy, of weakness, ye muddleheads. Submit yourselves to the rules of business as men do, by which alone you can make God's business succeed."

The want of thoroughness—of an accurate knowledge of business, science and the like, is a great stumbling-block in woman's way. She is now claiming the right to do a great many things for her own support which have hitherto been exclusively considered as man's work; and we would not doubt her natural aptitude for the most vigorous work of muscle and brain, yet must confess that many women have lost their original strength, either from disease or delicacy of constitution, and are not able to do man's work in many cases.

Boys are trained from their earliest childhood with the ideas of self-support. From their first attempts at keeping "pin-shops"—preaching, lecturing, etc., even while in petticoats, we see the germs of business occupations; but the miniature woman tends her doll-baby—dresses and undresses it, endeavors to feed it, and washes it, instead of mounting upon the dinner-table to preach to and harangue the vacant chairs; or spreads the counter in the woodshed or barn with miniature cookies, cakes and tarts—or less vendible commodities which the boy disposes to his playmates for a pin.

In this way unconscious children exhibit the traits of sex implanted in them by an all-wise Creator.

But, alas! women outnumber the men in the eastern portion of our Continent; and marriage is far from a certainty to many of them; and there comes a time when it is absolutely indispensable that they should do something for their own support; and then a terrible sense of their incapacity to engage in business pursuits, is borne in upon them.

They can be seamstresses, but sewing even with a machine is a most burdensome occupation, and grinds the flesh from their bones, and effaces the roses from their cheeks. They scorn the idea of offering their services as nurse-maids, or the like; and few of them possess the education requisite to fit themselves to become school-teachers or governesses.

Unless a girl knows that she must teach for her support, while receiving her education, she is usually satisfied with a superficial knowledge of history, geography, algebra and the sciences; and when she leaves school, she rarely opens her books again.

If she does possess a desire for knowledge, she may continue to pursue serious studies; but it is not often the case. Now, we maintain that all women, we care not how high the social position may be, nor how great their fathers' possessions, should have a serious purpose in life, and pursue it with *thoroughness*.

Some of our young friends may consider marriage a pursuit; and will declare that they are doing all in their power to accomplish it. Granted; but let us remind you that the young men of the day are apt to shun young girls whose only fortune lies in a pretty face, a few curls and white hands; and unless your fathers' purses are well-filled, you may be destined to remain single; and even if your strenuous endeavors are rewarded with success, you may find it desirable to be a good dressmaker or milliner, or an accurate book-keeper, or the like, even when you are a wife.

The duties of a wife and mother can only be properly discharged by those who are thoroughly educated. A mother must often play the part of nurse, or even doctor, so she needs to understand physiology and hygiene. A knowledge of these things may be the means of saving lives that are far dearer to her than her own.

Then she needs to keep accounts, to make estimates, to plan economies; and there is no danger of her being injured by knowing too much.

One of the merchant princes of New York told us that from his first commencing business in a country store, he had been indebted to his wife's sagacity for many good strokes of fortune, and had never taken any steps in commercial life without her consent and approval, and that he considered that he owed his large fortune quite as much to her foresight as to his own labor.

Women, in many cases, are too ready to accept the prevalent notion that their delicacy of constitution unfits them to learn some trade, and therefore will content themselves with thrusting a needle filled with brightly-colored wool through a bit of canvas, or preparing a "stunning" suit to storm the citadel of some young man's heart, or in making some fanciful or useless thing. Perhaps they will learn to beat together a loaf of cake, or prepare some sweet confection; but they rarely learn to bake a loaf of bread, to roast a sirloin of beef, or make a shirt, while living with papa.

May we urge our fair readers to attempt better things? to obtain a thorough knowledge of some science, some trade, some art, which if reverses come (and vicissitudes are frequent in this land) they will be able to earn their own dresses at least, if not their livelihood?

We do not counsel you to demand your "rights"—we are no advocate of the so-called "*woman's rights*"—we would on no account cast a vote; but we do counsel you to take the benefit of the right of self-support always granted to your brothers, and by a thorough education endow yourselves with power to feed and clothe yourselves, and prove the falsity of these lines:

"Why, what a wil'ful, wayward thing is woman!
Even in their best pursuits so loose of soul
That every breath of passion shakes their frame,
And every fancy turns them."

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

Biographical Sketches.

MAXIMILIAN.

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

In July, 1857, a royal marriage took place in Europe. The bridegroom was the Archduke Maximilian; the bride, the Princess Carlota, of Belgium. Both had been born in the purple, and educated amid the influences and traditions of monarchy. But, unlike the majority of princely marriages, this was not one of convenience alone. These young people loved each other. The future seemed very bright to them. Maximilian was then twenty-five; Carlota seventeen. There was no foreboding that a violent death would come to one in the bloom of life, and a fate worse than death overtake the other.

Ferdinand Maximilian was born in the palace of Schönbrnn, near Vienna, on the 6th of July, A. D. 1832. He was the second son of Francis Charles, Archduke of Austria, and of the Archduchess Frederica Sophia. His eldest brother is Francis Joseph, the present Emperor of Austria. The mother of Maximilian was a very superior woman; under her wise direction the mental qualities of her son were not cultivated at the expense of the physical; but both were equally well trained. His mind was active, and he early showed an intense love of study. Prince Esterhazy instructed him in the Hungarian language; Count de Schnyder in mathematics; Baron de Binther in diplomacy; Rev. Mr. Myre in religion, and Vice Admiral Zerman in naval tactics and Italian. He spoke German, English, Hungarian, Sclavonic, French, Italian and Spanish. Altogether, his education was not unworthy of one who might at any time be called to rule an empire. He was a great lover of books, and from them he imbibed the desire of comparing his own experience of that which he read with the views taken of it by his favorite authors. He accordingly began to travel. When only sixteen, he visited Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and later, England and Brazil. Of Queen Victoria he always retained pleasant memories.

He had determined to prepare himself for the navy. In 1854, he sailed as commander in the corvette Minerva, and while on the Minerva he received his commission as Vice-Admiral and Commander-in-chief of the Austrian navy. In 1855, he sailed in the Swartzenberg, accompanied by a fleet of seventeen vessels, for Candia, the Archipelago and Syria. He visited the Holy Land and Egypt. In the following year, he was the guest of Louis Napoleon at the palace of St. Cloud.

Shortly after his marriage, he was appointed Governor-General of Lombard-Venice. From all accounts he seems to have satisfied the Italians as well as any Austrian ruler could. He suggested numerous reforms, and showed that he was not deficient as a statesman. He was generous and charitable; one of his biographers relates that at the great fire in Chigreale, he cheered up the men who were fighting the flames; and when the Po, the Ambro, the Ticino united to flood the land, he set out in a frail bark to carry succor to the destitute. During his governorship in Italy, he was informed that some of the disaffected intended to throw a bombshell under his carriage as he drove to the theatre. His friends endeavored to dissuade him from going; but he persisted in entering the carriage, which was unguarded, saying coolly to his companion, Count de Stromboli—

"If I jump it will be in good company."

"No living man, not an Italian," says Mr. Hall, one of his legal advisers, "could have governed there without making enemies; and probably no foreigner could have reigned with as few enemies as he." The beauty, grace and charity of his young wife had much to do with his popularity with the masses.

As early as October, 1861, the fatal Mexican project was broached in a letter signed by Señor Gutierrez de Estrada, on behalf of many other Mexicans. In this letter Señor de Estrada, after saying that Mexico was the spoil of intestine convulsions, renewed without cessation, expressed the joy of the Mexican people if Maximilian should support the great work of the regeneration of their country. In reply, the Archduke wrote that, "My cooperation in favor of the work of governmental transformation, on which depends, according to your convictions, the salvation of Mexico, could not be determined unless a national manifestation should prove to me, in an undoubted manner, the desire of the nation to see me occupy the throne."

We have here no space to enter into the causes that led the Mexican government into complications with England, Spain and France. To understand these, the reader must consult some work on the recent troubles in never-untroubled Mexico.

On the 10th of June, 1863, the Mexican and French forces, under the command of Generals Marquez and Forey, entered the city of Mexico, the Juarez party having retreated on the last day of the preceding month. By a decree of the French general, a provisional government was formed, which adopted as its title that of "Regency of the Empire." On October 3, a commission, named by this Regency, offered the crown to Maximilian, at his residence, the palace of Miramar, near Trieste. Early in 1864, Maximilian renounced his right to the crown of Austria, as a preliminary step toward accepting that of Mexico; and on the 10th of April the proffered diadem was definitely accepted. On the 28th of May, the Emperor and Empress landed on the soil of their new dominions—at Vera Cruz. Music, acclamations and the firing of artillery welcomed them. How false was the promise of this brilliant ovation!

The Emperor took up his residence in the National Palace, in the City of Mexico. The palace stands on the site of the royal residence of Montezuma. Maximilian lived plainly; experience had taught him perhaps, that to dazzle the eyes of a wavering people by a display of imperial splendor, is not the most certain way of gaining their affection. The Empress Carlota was noted for her charity; it is stated that during her stay in the City of Mexico the number of beggars sensibly decreased.

Maximilian's position, after the first burst of welcome was over, was anything but enviable. The opposition party kept up a constant agitation. The Liberals gained daily in strength and courage. If left to himself the Emperor probably would have gained the affections of his subjects, but he was hampered by the French. By the treaty of Miramir it had been decided that each body of French or allied troops in Mexico should be under the sole control of a French commander, and the Emperor was blamed for the acts of soldiers over whom he had no authority.

We all know how the imperial experiment ended. One morning Maximilian was surprised in Queretaro, which the Liberals with thirty thousand men had besieged. Escobedo was their commander. The Emperor was captured, tried and condemned to death. Two of his counsel, Messrs. Palacio and De la Torre, applied for his pardon. Their application was refused. On the day before his execution, Maximilian interceded in vain for the lives of Generals Miramon and Mejia.

On the morning of June 19, 1867, Maximilian, Miramon and Mejia, accompanied by the priests appointed to administer the rites of religion, arrived at the "Cerro de los Campanas," (Hill of the Bells.) Three thousand soldiers were drawn up in a square around the place of execution. Maximilian gave the word "Fire!" Six soldiers fired at each victim. The Emperor's last words were, "Hombre! Hombre!" (Man! O Man!)

Later, the same vessel—the Austrian steamer Novara—that had brought Maximilian and his young wife to the New World, full of life and hope, returned, carrying his shattered body to the Old, where that young wife now lived, a helpless maniac.

THE BROKEN HEART.

BY SYDNEY WHITING.

[There is a superstition among many seafaring people that fairy bells are heard when lover, husband or relative is returning from some sea expedition; but, alas, they often give an aerial peal to deceive, as in the following poems.]

I.

His voice was sweet, his words were fair;
Would that his love had ne'er been spoken;
Would that the pole-star heard my prayer,
In words, as now, in anguish broken!
Would that the awful Greenland gales
Could drown my sighs! for then, oh, then,
I should be where my Alick sails,
And share the fate of darling men.
Would I were in that churning sea,
Where glassy icebergs, slowly moving,
Might threaten death to him and me!
But what is death when mad with loving?
O Alick, why those whispers low,
Those honey'd words, those soft entreatings?
For far away, midst ice and snow,
Thou wilt forget our summer meetings.

II.

His voice was sweet, his words were fair;
Oh, how I pray'd him ne'er to leave me!
He only smooth'd my streaming hair;
Said he, "My love, thy fears deceive thee;
Trust me, my Annie, soon will come
The happy days when peace and plenty
Shall be the guts of ice and foam:
We cannot wed with coffers empty."
"Oh, yes," I cried, "I'd wed thee now,
And work or starve, to stay thy going!"
He only kiss'd my throbbing brow;
Says he, "My love, the wind is blowing;
The southern breeze creeps up the bay;
See, on you cliff the pines are bending;
They point toward the frozen sea,
Propitious winds and wishes sending."

III.

"Ah, Alick darling, say not so;
Thou wrongly read'st the warning motion:
It says, 'Let not thy lover go,
There's death around the frozen ocean.'
Then hearest how the curlews scream,
In echo to the dreadful warning."
Heavily said, "'Tis but a dream—
I must away ere break of morning:
But when in spring thou hear'st the sound
Of magic bells above thee ringing,
Know that the whaler, homeward bound,
From off her prow the spray is flinging."
His boat sped o'er the seething surge,
The wind flung back my wild cries—scoffing;
With strong and cruel pulls they urge
The craft that bears him to the offing.

IV.

But when I hear the curfew chimes,
They'll tell me that my lad's returning;
Yet, oh, the dreary, dreary times,
With hope so cold and love so burning.
The wintry months go slowly past,
I listen for the fairies' pealing,
I watch for every spar or mast,
Away from home forever stealing.
And mother frets, and father's sad;
They deem me daft thus ever sighing;
Oh, could I, as a sailor lad,
Across the Arctic seas be flying!
For then, oh, then, the scalding tear
That burns my cheek would not be flowing:
For I should sail with Alick dear,
Close to his heart when blasts are blowing.

V.

The maniac windmill whirls its arms,
Like some weird giant winds defying;
The sea-birds scream their shrill alarms;
The day in streaks of amber's dying;
The waves are swashing on the strand,
Or in the boom ng caverns roaring;
Anon the tide leaves bare the sand,
And weedy pools reflect the gloaming.
The coast is barren, stern and rad
As those dark shores where he is roving;
And yet they wonder I am mad—
Mad with the strain of over-loving!
But hark! I hear the elfin bells!—
Ah, Alick, soon these arms will fold thee—
In rippling chimes their music swells,
And rings, "*He comes*," as Alick told me.

VI.

"Ah, yes, he comes;" but o'er the sea
The tempest shrieks in mad commotion;
The lightning darts along the lee,
And melts in one the sky and ocean.
Alas! those tongues of molten steel
Light up a wreck on breakers driven,
And on the dark pale spectres kneel
And breathe their last death spair to Heaven.
The wraiths—how strange!—those fairy bells
Steal softly o'er the foaming water;
From out the din their music swells,
Like tripping flutes midst war and slaughter.
But on the shore a pale corpse lies
With fond arms round, no more to sever;
And on the gale this requiem flies,
"In death my Alick's mine, forever."

Sam Barton's Ghost Story.

BY BELLE BREMER.

We were a picturesque group for the pencil of an artist, as we sat round the fire in Charlie Harmon's room that night. When I say we, I mean Sam Barton, Charlie Harmon and myself—Phil Boynton, at your service.

Charlie was a lawyer in embryo; in other words, he was a student of law in the office of Messrs. Pinch & Sharp. Barton was engineer on a double-triggered lightning express train, but was now off duty on account of indisposition. Your humble servant was in one of the large establishments where dry-goods are wont to be sold, having risen from the position familiarly known as "Cash" to that of head clerk in the said establishment. Now then you have us.

We were a picturesque group, as I said. Charlie was stretched on the lounge, his legs crossed, one foot elevated at an angle of about forty-five degrees. Sam was seated in a chair, his nether extremities dangling gracefully over the back of another. While my No. 8s reposed quietly along with "Blackstone," "Cuitty" and a lot of lesser lights, on the table. Of course we were all smoking.

It was a wild night; the wind shrieked and howled about the house as if a thousand demons were warring for entrance; and without, the night was of inky blackness, unbroken save when the vivid flashes of lightning lit up everything with a momentary glare.

"Heavy cannonading away to the left," said Barton, emitting a thin wreath of smoke from his fiercely mustached lips, and listening to the almost continuous roar of thunder. Barton was an old soldier.

"And there's the musketry," returned Charlie, as the rain came with rattle and dash against the window. "By Jove! what a time for the practice of the black art; I fancy it was on just such a night as this that Tam O'Shanter saw his Satanic majesty's fandango in old Kirk Alloway. By the way, I think a ghost story would be in keeping with the night. Come, Barton, you have been all over this mundane sphere; surely in some of your wanderings you have seen the spirit that walketh in darkness."

"Phil is a better hand at story-telling than I am, suppose we hear from him?" said Sam, turning to me, but I modestly declined, and waved my hand for him to proceed.

"Well, I never saw anything in the way of the supernatural but once," began Sam, "and I don't know whether you will term it a ghost or something pertaining to the occult sciences;" and Sam gazed vacantly into the fire and twisted his brigandish-looking mustache, till the ends thereof pointed fiercely toward the parallels of latitude.

"Well, whatever it was, let us have the story, Sam," Charlie urged, lighting a fresh cigar and settling himself comfortably to listen.

"It was when I stayed at Uncle Jessie's. You see, Uncle Jess thought I was studying too hard, and took me out to the farm to 'recruit,' as he said. Poor innocent old man, if he had only known the tramps and sprees Cousin Tom and I took, he would not have thought his promising nephew was 'recruiting' much; but we had heard it said, 'Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise,' and so we did not inform the old man. Scarcely a night passed that did not find Tom and I at a party, cornhusking, or apple-bee.

"One day we received an invitation to an 'apple-cutting' over the creek, about three miles from uncle's. Of course we went. There were signs of a coming storm in the air, but catch us staying at home for that! We arrived at Farmer Jones's in due time, and found the apple-bee in full blast. After the apples were disposed of, we tripped the light fantastic, &c., till about three o'clock, when we began to think of going home. But, great Olympus, who could turn out in such a storm as was raging? Farmer Jones decided the question for us by inviting all hands to stay till morning. Beds were made on the floor for the accommodation of the boys, and we were told to 'turn in,' which we did. Soon the prolonged *sawing of gourds* proclaimed the fact that most of the boys were asleep. I was gradually succumbing to the influence of the drowsy god myself, when voices proceeding from the bed occupied by the farmer and his wife arrested my attention.

"'Hezekiah,' the old woman was saying, 'you'd no business to ask sich a lot of fellers to stay all night. What if they should all stay to breakfast, Hezekiah?'

"'Well, I know, Betsy, but what was a feller to do? besides, I did not think they would stay.'

"'Well, they wouldn't if they'd 'a' had any manners,' returned the amiable old lady.

"That was enough. 'Tom,' I whispered.

"'All right,' answered that gentleman.

"'Let's go.'

"He had been awake and heard it all. We got up, stepping lightly so as not to awaken the rest of the boys, who were now snoring in concert, groped our way to the kitchen, and thence out into the pitchy blackness of the night. I certainly think the prince of the powers of the air was abroad that night. 'Wind warred with wind, storm howled to storm, and lightning forked lightning crossed.'"

"Oh, hang 'Pollock,'" said Charlie, "tell us of the ghost, goblin or whatever it was."

"And dark!" continued Sam, not heeding the interruption, "why it equalled the darkness that once covered the land of Egypt, for if the darkness could not be felt, the trees and bushes could that occasionally came in contact with our heads or scratched our faces, causing ejaculations a great deal more forcible than elegant. Our way lay through a woods' lot with only a path leading through it. We had blundered along over briar and brake for about a quarter of a mile, I should judge, when Tom suddenly ejaculated, 'Lost, by the everlasting John Rogers!' at the same time stooping down to feel if we were in the path, while I sought the nearest tree to determine which was north by examining the moss upon the bark. I had just made the comforting discovery that we were going in an opposite direction to uncle's place, when chancing to turn my eyes to the left of me a little, a sight burst upon my vision which caused a cold creeping sensation to ascend my spinal column, and every individual hair on my head to assume the perpendicular on its own responsibility. I gazed and gazed, and still the wonder grew. What could it be? There, not twenty rods away, was a *bed of living coals* and a boiling cauldron—or, at least, I supposed it to be boiling—over which some infernal thing was keeping watch. I thought of the witches of Macbeth, but it could not be they, for only *one* horrible shape, if 'shape it might be called,' kept guard over the cauldron. My courage by this time had returned, at least to a certain extent, the queer, aguish feeling had left me, my hair had assumed its normal position, and I felt like investigating.

"All this time the rain, coming down in torrents, had no effect on the bed of coals. 'Tom,' I sung out at last, 'here's some "cantrip sleight" that I don't understand, come and help me investigate!' but my dutiful cousin, thinking I meant to fool him, politely told me to take my departure to the reverberating echoes of Heaven's artillery. Which means, being translated, 'go to thunder.'

"After a bit he came up. 'By the holy spoon-makers what's that, Sam?' were his first words on catching sight of his Satanic majesty's brewing. Tom gazed awhile and declared he saw the thing move; and gave it as his opinion that it was the devil. I coincided, and together we resolved to solve the mystery if we died by it. We compassed the thing round and round. At last we made a desperate charge with our clubs, when—vanish ghost, devil, witches and fire in a trice. And in an instant 'a' was dark.'"

"But what was it?" said Charlie, excitedly, sitting up and staring at Barton.

"Nothing but a fine bed of toadstools, their phosphorescence causing them to assume the appearance of a bed of glowing coals. The 'shape' nothing more than a stump with an ugly sliver attached, and it *did* look ugly in the sickly phosphorescent light of the toad-stools."

"Just about the way all ghost stories turn out," commented Charlie. "Bimmee them down and there's no ghost in them."

☞ WORK TOGETHER.—People would soon be astonished at results if they would all work together for the common good.

COURAGE.

BY GRACE GARLAND.

Higher yet, weak mortal, higher,
Would you win the starry crown;
Heeding not earth-born desire,
Pointing only to renown.

Higher yet, though weak and weary,
E'en through sorrow's chilling blast;
Though the way seem dark and dreary,
You will gain the height at last.

E'en though storm-clouds darkly lower;
E'en though Hope refuse its ray;
Know 'tis ever the darkest hour
Just precedes the dawn of day.

Higher yet, than, dear ones, higher;
Onward, upward, be your cry;
Yielding not to vain desire—
Pledged to conquer or to die!

There's a brilliant crown awaiting,
With which earth's can ne'er compare;
And with time not hesitating,
You may win and wear it there.

THE CUBAN PATRIOT;

OR,

THE PILOT AND THE SPY.

A STORY

Founded upon the romantic realities of the present bitter struggle in "The Gem of the Antilles."

BY COLONEL PRENTISS INGRAHAM,

AUTHOR OF "THE SPECTRE YACHT," "THE MASKED SPY," "THE SCRIP AGENT," "TRACKED THROUGH LIFE," &c., &c., &c.

CHAPTER XII.

AN UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTER.

If we are marked to die, we are enough
To do our country loss; and if to live,
The fewer men the greater share of honor.
—*Shakspeare's Henry V.*

Upon leaving the manor house, Leon Delmont quickly made his way on board the Foxhound, which he found, as he had directed, with her crew at their posts, and but one line connecting her with the shore.

Springing aboard he was welcomed by Captain Harold, who was becoming alarmed at his long absence, and instantly assuming command he took his stand upon the bridge amidships, where he could control with eye, voice and hand his ship, and at the same time obtain a better observation of the sea around and the dangerous channel he had to guide the steamer through. Swiftly the graceful craft moved from under the shadow of the hills, and then for the first time the dangers ahead, worse than rocks, were discovered, as the rising moon fell upon the dark hulls of the Spanish vessels of war; to meet *them* was certain death, while in being shipwrecked there was at least a slight chance of hope.

Coolly and daringly the brave pilot faced the dangers that surrounded the devoted ship, and after numerous strange manœuvres about the rocky bay, at length, as the reader has seen, succeeded in eluding his persistent pursuers and successfully running the gauntlet into the open sea.

"Again you have saved the steamer, Captain Delmont, and in a difficulty from which I deemed it impossible to extricate her," said Captain Harold, warmly grasping the hand of his friend, as soon as the dangers were passed.

"Yes; no ship of Spain can now overhaul your fleet little craft, captain; but let us understand each other, ere I leave," and adjourning to the cabin, Leon gave the captain a receipt, in the name of Cespedes, for the stores and men landed in safety upon the coast, and in conclusion remarked: "Now, remember our signals. When you return again with another cargo, put off and on with the flags of the United States, Mexico and England flying, and from the mountains you will see your signal answered, in case I am driven from my home ere you get back again; for you know I live in a dangerous community—in the lion's den as it were—and know not what moment ruin and death may come upon me and mine; but if still at home, I will answer your signal from the shore."

"True indeed is it that our Spanish foes keep us under an iron heel, and spare neither woman nor child in their hatred," answered the captain.

"Now I have to leave you; hold! do not check the speed of the steamer, for watchful eyes may be upon us from the shore; let my boat be put over the side, and Dido and myself will enter it and then cast off."

Farewells were spoken, the pilot and the negro entered the small boat towing alongside, cast loose, and soon were pulling shoreward, while the Foxhound, like a bird free from a cage, sped joyfully seaward under a full head of steam, and with her clouds of white duck spread to catch the rising wind.

Sadly Captain Harold stood upon the quarter-deck, gazing after the retreating boat, looking like a mere speck upon the moonlit waters, and pitying in his heart the daring man who was returning to the land to mingle in wild scenes of carnage, perhaps there to meet his death.

After rounding the headland into open waters, Leon had so directed the steamer's course close in shore, that when he left her in his small boat, he was hardly a mile from the land; hence, the strong arms of Dido soon made the little craft glide over that space, and in a few moments she came under the shelter of the hills.

"Here, Dido, I will leave you, for 'tis but a short distance to where I will find my men, while you can creep along shore with the boat and secure her at the dock ere daylight. Tell my mother and sister that I am safe, and expect soon to be with them," said Leon, as he sprang ashore.

"Yes, Marse Leon, but I would like to go with you," answered the black.

"That would bring us into difficulty, Dido, for were the boat found here in the morning, you know it would direct suspicion upon me," returned Leon, and arranging his arms more conveniently for ready use, he struck off up the hill-side at a rapid pace, while Dido once again resumed his oars.

Hardly had Leon walked a hundred yards, when suddenly, from a copse of woods, darted three horsemen, one of whom he at once recognized as Captain Moreno.

Feeling assured that he was not known yet, Leon quickly turned up the collar of his sea-jacket, bound his handkerchief loosely over the lower portion of his face, and drew his slouch-hat far down over his eyes.

"Some devilment you are in, I warrant me, or you'd not hide your face that way," exclaimed Captain Moreno, drawing rein in the path of the young man.

Without answering, Leon attempted to pass on one side, but the Spaniard called out with angry vehemence—

"Hold! sir; I am an officer of Spain, and have a right to know who it is, going at night, in disguises, in this rebellious isle."

"You had best attempt to unmask me, then," said Leon, in a low voice, altered by the folds of the handkerchief across the mouth.

"So be it, I will," yelled the Spaniard, now in a rage, and he spurred upon the youth, attempting to ride him down.

Avoiding the onset, Leon firmly seized the bit, and with dexterous force hurled the horse backward in such a manner as to unseat his rider, who was thrown to the ground.

For the instant stunned by the shock, but unhurt, Captain Moreno arose, and drawing his sword, rushed upon the young man, who was now standing on the defensive, having drawn from beneath his jacket a short but keen blade.

"I warn you back, sir!" exclaimed Leon, firmly, as the Spaniard rushed on; but, unheeding, he raised his sword and brought it down with a terrible blow aimed at the head of his antagonist.

Skilfully Leon turned the blow one side, and then pressed forward upon his adversary with such vigor that the Spaniard was compelled to give ground step by step.

Finding that he had met his superior in swordsmanship, the Spaniard called loudly for his two followers to come to his aid, and having secured their horses they were nothing loth to have a bout, where so little danger came to their lot, so drawing their weapons they also came forward to the attack.

Hitherto during the encounter Leon had acted upon the defensive, but when he saw that the cowardly officer was calling for aid, he pressed forward and gave him a severe thrust through his left arm, just as the soldiers came up in hostile attitude.

To withdraw his weapon from its fleshy scabbard was the work of an instant, and then with a bound he was upon his new opponents and, ere they could recover from the surprise of his sudden attack, he had driven his keen blade through the breast of the foremost soldier, who with a death-cry sank to the earth.

For a moment Captain Moreno, who loved dearly his wicked life, turned as if about to fly, but then fearing that that course would be certain death, he called to the remaining soldier to press on, and the two attacked Leon with renewed vigor.

Coolly the young patriot received the double attack, parrying every thrust, and returning lunge for lunge, when suddenly he was startled by perceiving another form bound upon the scene, and the next moment the soldier was seized in the strong arms of Dido, and borne forcibly to the earth, while at the same time, Captain Moreno received another sword-thrust, this time in the side.

More frightened than hurt, and weak from loss of blood, the Spanish officer, with a muttered curse sank to the ground in a fainting condition, while Dido, having choked the soldier into insensibility, arose and stood beside his master.

"Well, my brave fellow, you have done me a good turn, and I thank you sincerely for it," exclaimed Leon grasping the hand of his black friend.

"Me hear the clash of swords, and put back just in time, Marse Leon; but what you do with um?" said the negro, pointing at the same time to the dead soldier and insensible forms of the captain and his remaining follower.

"Hardly do I know, Dido; yes, I have it. Take their arms from them, they will be useful to the patriots; then as soon as this soldier comes to, I will let him go for help for his commander, who is not seriously wounded."

"Can I go with you now, Marse Leon?" asked the negro, as if he were anxious not to leave his young master to confront other dangers alone.

"Yes; go to the cove and sink your boat, and at another time we can raise it; then come back and await me by the horses, two of which we will take, and the other leave for the wounded officer; remember, do not let them see your face.

Dido left to obey the order, and then, with the skill of a surgeon, Leon dressed the wounds of Captain Moreno, who had now recovered consciousness, as had also the soldier, who was sitting up in a bewildered manner, as if only half satisfied with his position.

"Now, sir, you are at liberty to return to your camp; here, I will aid you to mount the meanest of these horses, and your man here will walk by your side; the dead soldier I suppose you will see buried."

"Your arms, and the two best horses, I will relieve you of; now be off."

"Who came to your aid, sir, a moment ago?" asked the Spaniard in response.

"It matters not; before you attack a man in future, be assured that you have it all your own way, or greater harm than this may come of it," returned Leon, sternly.

"You may escape now, sir, but we will meet again. If I mistake not, I well know that voice."

"You may know it better ere long; but be off."

The Spanish captain needed no second bidding, and mounting the horse designated for him, he rode away, with the soldier walking by his side.

No sooner had they disappeared in the woods, than Dido came up, and in five minutes more he and his master were well mounted upon the Spanish horses, and dashing away at a rapid pace over hill and dale, leaving the dead body of the soldier alone in the gloom of the forest, whose silence had lately been broken by the clash of steel and cry of combat.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STRUGGLE FOR VICTORY.

Even like an arrow on the wind he rode
His winged courser, and with noble daring
Swept with his chivalrous escort past our front,
Even at the stormy edge of clashing battle.
—*Sir A. Hunt's Julian.*

Under the command of Major Noel Dunbar, and the guidance of the young Cuban that Leon Delmont had appointed to conduct the party to the camp of Cespedes, the force guarding the stores moved slowly and cautiously on, following the windings of the beach, until they came out at the broad highway leading into the interior of the island, and then branching off into the mountains, where the patriot troops were encamped.

"It is better to take the broad road here, instead of going through the plantations," said the young Cuban to Major Dunbar.

"You know best, and as the troops have now marched up to the Delmont manor, I suppose it would be just as safe, for in case of discovery, we have now at least three miles start," answered the young American, and again the party moved on, and at a rapid pace, with Major Dunbar, the guide, and some twenty men in advance, the pack mules with their drivers following, and a guard of some thirty more Cubans bringing up the rear.

As they marched along, the loud roar of the cannons fired at the Foxhound came to their ears, and they felt that the brave little vessel was indeed in imminent danger; and many an earnest prayer went up for her safety, as boom after boom echoed far and near, startling every recess of the hills with the ominous sound.

At length some dozen miles were gone over, but still the wearied men pressed on at a quick pace, and were congratulating themselves that they would escape to the mountains without molestation, for already had they reached the road leading up the steep ascent, when a cry came from the rear that they were followed.

Noel Dunbar told the guide to lead on quickly, and at the same time he dashed back to ascertain the cause of alarm.

It was too true; the sound of approaching feet were heard, coming on at a rapid pace, and the young commander felt that now had come the time for him to exhibit coolness and courage, or lose all that he had risked so much for.

"Steady, men! keep cool, and form in line here under the shadow of these trees; fire at the word only, and every one of you aim to take a Spanish life, for remember no mercy will be shown you."

The tones were decided and stern, and his bold manner gave his men confidence in their leader, and in a few seconds they were ambushed in readiness to meet the coming foe.

A turn in the road soon brought the coming enemy in sight, the moon glistening upon their arms, as they dashed on at a quick gallop, unconscious that they were rushing on to death.

First came the advance guard, some fifty in number, and behind them followed the main body of the regiment, numbering about three hundred men, with Colonel Alvarez at their head.

"Ready, men!" said Noel Dunbar, when the advance was within twenty yards, and then his voice rang with battle ardor as he called out, "Fire!"

Before that flash of fire, that deadly aim, and leaden hail, the Spanish troopers recoiled in dismay, while many a horse and rider sank to the earth to rise no more.

"Follow up your vantage! load again and fire," called the clear voice of the American commander; and following upon his words, were the deep tones of Colonel Alvarez, crying out, "Form in column! Forward, trot, charge!"

Like an avalanche they came on, their gallant leader at their head, the reins in hand firmly, and swords drawn, while the moonlight flashed back the glitter of their helmets and steel.

"All ready! Stand firm *for your lives*, Cubans! Fire!" and as the order left the lips of Noel Dunbar, his men poured in another volley, more deadly than before, upon their assailants, cutting many a brave trooper from his saddle in the agonies of death.

But Colonel Alvarez was a daring and skilful commander, and though wounded, was not the man to be easily beaten back; so loudly calling to his recoiling soldiers, he led them again to the attack, and in the road the fight at once became general, and a hand-to-hand conflict.

The patriots had gained an advantage by their first two deadly volleys, but then they were greatly outnumbered by their foes, and each moment were pressed slowly back.

Feeling assured that his friends would need every man to their aid, the guide, Otto Goicaera, moved the pack-mules forward at still greater speed, and sent back his entire guard to reinforce Major Dunbar.

The timely arrival of these momentarily aided the fortunes of the Cubans, but discovering that the reinforcement was but a small one, and encouraged by their bold leader, the Spaniards again pressed forward with renewed ardor, and once more the patriots were forced to give ground, though they did it slowly and with determined stubbornness, each moment cheered by their daring young leader, whose voice rose above the din of combat.

Noel Dunbar at length began to feel that the tide of battle was turning against him, and eagerly did he long for the help promised by Leon Delmont, but still it came not, and he made up his mind to hold the Spaniards in check until the pack-mules had gained a sufficient start to prevent their capture.

With this determination he rallied his men more closely around him, and pressed hard against their foes; but Colonel Alvarez was now assured that the Cubans could bring no more men into the field, and he therefore called up his reserve, and with his entire force moved rapidly up against the position held by the patriots.

Slowly they were forced from their ground, and with yells of victory the Spaniards came on with a rush, while the patriots gave up all for lost, and bitterly mourned their defeat.

But suddenly yell after yell echoed through the forest aisles, louder, fiercer than the cry of triumph from the Spaniards; then came the beat of rushing hoofs, and a wild mass of horsemen dashed upon the scene, firing deadly volleys into the crowded ranks of Spain's soldiery, and bringing many a glittering blade down upon a Spanish head or shoulders.

It was a wild-looking band of horsemen, with the face of each rider concealed by a flattering white cover, with two holes cut therein through which gleamed eyes flashing with deadly hatred; and terrible and weird-like, as though they were phantom horsemen, looked they in the dim light of the moon, clouded as it was by the smoke and dust of battle.

To resist the terrible onset was impossible, and in superstitious dread at their strange and sudden appearance, the Spanish troopers turned and fled in dismay in spite of the imploring entreaties of their colonel.

Seeing that his efforts were useless, Colonel Alvarez in bitter despair at the behavior of his men, turned to leave the field, for he was faint from his wounds, which though slight were painful; but two horsemen suddenly wheeled alongside, and before he could resist he was securely bound.

Ere a word could be exchanged with his captors, another horseman dashed up, a handkerchief concealing his face, and in angry tones, cried—

"Release that officer, men."

"He is the commander of the Spaniards," returned one of the captors doggedly.

"I care not, release him," said the horseman.

"And why?"

"Dare not question my motives, sir, or you'll find it to your cost," was the stern answer, and turning to the officer he severed his bonds, and continued—

"Colonel Alvarez, you are free to go, sir; take advantage of my permission and leave at once."

The Spaniard gazed intently into the eyes before him, as if to read there the secret of the hidden face, but without a word he received his thanks, and then Alvarez rode away, leaving the dead and dying of his regiment behind him.

The horseman who had appeared was the commander of the reinforcements, and none other than Leon Delmont, who, having with Dido sought the rendezvous where the Cuban band were to be concealed, at once ordered them to move, and arrived just in time to save the command of Noel Dunbar from destruction, and thereby the loss of the stores brought by the Foxhound.

That the Cuban planters might not be recognized in the fray, Leon had ordered each one of them to make a mask of his pocket-handkerchief, cutting eye-holes, and thus they had entered the fight, while their strange appearance had excited the superstitious ideas of the Spaniards.

"Now, Itervan, you must let the men at once gather up all the arms and accoutrements of these dead Spaniards, for they will be useful to our forces, and disperse the band, as each one of them must hasten to his home with all possible dispatch, for, without doubt, a searching inquiry will be entered into in the morning," remarked Leon to Itervan Alvente, who had, upon leaving the cliff, sought the rendezvous of the Cubans, and held them in readiness for work.

Turning to Noel Dunbar, Leon continued: "Major Dunbar, you have made a most noble defence; let your men mount those captured horses, and then hasten on after your pack-mules, for, though I do not dread a further attack, it is as well to be on the safe side."

A moment more and Leon Delmont and the faithful Dido were riding at full speed in the direction of the coast where they had left the boat, and upon arriving near the spot where they had had the encounter with Captain Moreno and his followers, they approached cautiously until they discovered the form of the dead soldier still lying where it had been left by them.

"They are not back yet—good! now let us tie the horses where we found them," said Leon, and in ten minutes more they had arrived upon the beach.

Wading into the water Dido raised the sunken boat, and, bailing it out, the two men were soon gliding over the waters, just as day was brightening in the east.

"Hold, Dido! yonder come those Spanish vessels. We will go out to them," and Leon headed the little boat in the direction of the Spaniards.

"Remember, Dido, we are sent out by Colonel Alvarez to conduct those vessels into a secure retreat."

"I understand, Marse Leon, you can 'pend on me for tellin' de truth," answered the negro, with a grin.

In half an hour more the leading Spanish vessel was hailed, Leon and Dido taken on board, and while the former was conducted into the cabin, to have an interview with the Spanish commander, Dido made himself comfortable forward among the crew.

CHAPTER XIV.

LEANDRO ALVAREZ.

Man is one;
And he hath one great heart. It is thus we feel,
With a gigantic throb athwart the sea,
Each other's rights and wrongs: thus are we men."
—*Barlay's Festus.*

The defeated Spaniards drew rapidly from the field, where they had been so severely handled by the band of patriots, and by daylight were several miles away.

But soon to their surprise, for they had believed him a prisoner, their colonel appeared in their midst, and his angry words checked their advance, and sent a number of them back to the battle-ground to bury the dead and look to the wounded.

"The remainder of the men, Lieutenant Moya, have closely kept in command, for we may move at any moment. Ha! whom have we here?" and Colonel Alvarez glanced up as a horseman dashed into their midst.

"Well, Itervan, is it you?"

"Yes, colonel; after I left last night, Señora Delmont said you asked for me. Can I be of any service?"

"None, I fear; here you behold the remnant of my regiment, for the insurgents handled us roughly," sadly returned the colonel.

"But you are wounded; not seriously, I hope?" said Itervan kindly, for he was greatly attached to his Spanish friend.

"No, nothing serious, although I have three wounds. Well, Moya, what is it?"

"Your orders have been obeyed, sir, so I insist that you seek rest," answered the lieutenant, coming up.

"The surgeon has already dressed my bruises—"

"That is not enough, Leandro, you must go with me," interrupted Itervan, addressing his friend by the name he had called him when they were brother officers together.

"Whither?"

"To Seaside Rest, for the señora requests it."

The Spaniard hesitated a moment; his pale face flushed, and then he replied quietly,

"I will go, and now, for I am very faint."

Itervan at once led his friend away, and in an hour more the wounded man was comfortably established as a temporary resident in the Delmont mansion, where the kindness of his fair hostess and her daughter almost caused him to forget his wounds.

Though placed *hors de combat*, Colonel Alvarez was not idle, but spent the morning in dictating his report of his engagement, to be sent to the commander-in-chief, with the request that a battery of artillery and an infantry detachment should be sent to reinforce him, as he was assured that his position was becoming an important one to check the movements of the insurgents.

Itervan wrote the dispatches as the colonel dictated them, for Lieutenant Moya was absent, attending to camp duties, and though each word was written with a heavy heart by the young Cuban, he was determined that, knowing as he did the intended movements of the Spanish troops, they should not reach the coast without molestation.

Thus the morning passed away, and lunch was served, at his request, in the sitting-room devoted to the use of the wounded colonel, and there Señora Delmont and Faustine joined him.

"Señora," suddenly said the Spaniard, "I hope you will pardon me for sending your son away last night upon a perilous duty, but I had a motive in so doing. I am aware that he is under the suspicion of being in sympathy with the insurgents, and hence I sent a report to headquarters of his saving the Tampa; but still the suspicion clung to him, and to have him out of the way, should a landing be attempted, I sent him off last night, also hoping that his safe-conduct of one of our vessels into a secure retreat would aid him with the authorities.

"I assure you, Colonel Alvarez, we are deeply grateful to you for your kindness, and I know that Leon, who is, I fear, very rash, will fully appreciate your motives," answered Señora Delmont, with considerable feeling.

"But then, I am troubled about something I cannot solve; first, upon my return this morning, I find Moreno laid up with two sword-wounds, and he gives a strange account of a combat with a man in mask, near the beach, and some miles above here; one of his followers was killed, and the other choked down; now, the captain says, he recognized the voice of his adversary, and declares that he was *—your son.*"

"What, Leon? It is impossible, for did he not put to sea last night?" exclaimed Señora Delmont, in alarm, while the faces of Faustine and Itervan paled with apprehension of coming evil.

"So I believed, but listen. When I was taken prisoner in the fight last night, a horseman, whom I had before noticed in the action as the leader by his daring and desperate fighting, rode up, caused my instant release, and calling me by name, bade me at once depart, a command I was not slow in obeying. The face of the horseman was concealed, as were those of his immediate followers, beneath a white covering, and I could not discern the features, but he wore a seaman's suit of gray cloth, and his voice, to me, sounded like that of Leon Delmont's."

For a moment there was perfect silence, and then a step sounded upon the verandah, and through the open window stepped the form of Leon Delmont.

With the general cry that greeted his appearance, all eyes at once turned upon the clothing worn by the young man—it was a seaman's suit, but *of dark-blue cloth.*

A smile of relief passed over the face of Colonel Alvarez as his eye noted the fact, and after the greeting was over he warmly extended his hand.

"What, you wounded! and how and where?" exclaimed Leon, with a surprised look upon his face that would have done credit to an actor.

"Yes, I was wounded last night in an engagement with the party landed from the insurgent steamer."

"She landed her men and stores, then?" said Leon innocently.

"Yes, and while we were gazing idly at the chase in the bay, the party were marching inland; but do you know that we were—or rather I was just discussing the possibility of your having been an actor in several stirring scenes on land last night," continued Colonel Alvarez.

"What! me? Why I have but just returned from on board the Spanish vessel of war?"

"Thank God!" was the fervent ejaculation of Señora Delmont, and a bright look of gratification passed over the Spaniard's face at this intelligence; but Itervan and Faustine exchanged meaning looks.

"You have?"

"Yes, we could not overhaul the Foxhound—"

"How knew you 'twas the Foxhound, señor?" asked the Spaniard, with a suspicious glance.

"You forget I informed you I had piloted her to sea the night I saved the Tampa."

"True, I had forgotten, and beg your pardon; please continue."

"Finding it impossible, as I said, to overhaul the Foxhound, the Mora gave up the chase, and I brought her into the bay."

"It is the Mora, then?" inquired the colonel with interest."

"Yes, señor, and her commander sent you this note."

"The commander of the Mora write to me? is there not some mistake, Señor Delmont? for Enrique Pancho and myself have not spoken for years."

"There is no mistake, colonel; Captain Pancho informed me that you were not upon friendly terms, but bade me hand you these papers."

Colonel Alvarez took an official-looking document, and breaking the seal, read aloud, as follows:—

"SPANISH SLOOP-OF-WAR MORA,
"Off Southern coast of Cuba,
"November 1871.

"TO LEANDRO ALVAREZ,
"Colonel Commanding,

"SIR—Your pilot has conducted the Mora to a safe anchorage, where I will remain for a short time to act in conjunction with you.

"I have the honor to be,
"Yours with respect,
"ENRIQUE PANCHO,
"Commander sloop-of war Mora."

"Mr. Delmont, I have to thank you, sir; please forgive my unjust suspicions," and Colonel Alvarez laid aside the official document, and broke the seal of the note handed him by Leon.

This he did not read aloud, and his brow darkened as his eyes perused the lines, while his teeth set firmly together.

"Señor Delmont, do me the kindness to read this; pardon me, señora and señorita, and you, Itervan," and Colonel Alvarez handed to Leon the note he had brought.

Taking it, he read—

"SPANISH SLOOP-OF-WAR MORA,
"COLONEL LEANDRO ALVAREZ,

"SIR—A few years since you slew in the *duello* my brother, General Pancho; and sinned against or sinning, the Panchos never forgive or forget, hence between our families there is the shadow of the *vendetta*.

"Owing to my absence heretofore upon foreign stations, I could not cause you to answer to me for my brother's life; now our paths have come together, and I challenge you to mortal combat.

"You know where to find me, and I shall expect an answer soon.

"ENRIQUE PANCHO."

Without a word Leon returned the note.

"Well!" said the colonel.

"It is not well; you cannot meet him."

"I can, and I *must*," and both the ladies having retired from the room, Colonel Alvarez continued, "If the Mora remains in these waters for a few days, I shall be sufficiently recovered to meet him; and can I ask you, Señor Delmont, and you, Alvente, to second me?" and the Spaniard placed the challenge in the hands of Itervan.

"Assuredly, you can rely upon me," answered Leon, and Itervan rejoined,

"I'll not only second you, Leandro, but if you are not well enough will fight him for you."

CHAPTER XV.

THE DOUBLE DUEL.

I have set my life upon a cast,
And I will stand the hazard of the die.
—*Shakspeare's Richard III.*

Several weeks passed after the incidents related in the foregoing chapter, and they had brought no great change upon the characters occupying the most prominent positions in this story.

The reinforcements asked for by Colonel Alvarez were promised, but not having yet arrived, Itervan had not enjoyed the satisfaction he had anticipated of molesting them while *en route* to the coast.

Though the affair between the Spanish regiment and the party that came in the Foxhound, had created considerable stir, and suspicion had fallen upon several as participants therein, no arrests had been made, owing to the moderation of Colonel Alvarez, who held the respect and kind wishes of his enemies, having gained a reputation as a most humane officer and courtly gentleman.

Having also recovered from his wounds, or nearly so, the gallant colonel was making preparations to meet Captain Pancho, who in the interim had taken several short cruises up and down the coast.

His acceptance of the challenge Colonel Alvarez had sent through Leon, who arranged the meeting between the two officers with Captain Pancho himself, as the second of that gentleman was at that time absent.

The morning chosen for the duel was clear and balmy, and the air braced up the feelings of Colonel Alvarez and his two seconds, as they galloped along the coast-road to the designated spot, almost within a stone's throw of where Captain Moreno and Leon had engaged in the night encounter.

Dismounting from their horses, they had not long to wait, ere the cutter of the Mora appeared in sight around the rocky point, and with regret Leon recognized in the stern sheets that the second of Captain Pancho was none other than Urban Fanchon, the second lieutenant of the Tampa.

Soon the party landed, and approached the spot where the horsemen were standing.

Pleasant salutes passed between Captain Pancho and Leon, and cold salutations between the two principals; but suddenly Lieutenant Fanchon exclaimed, as his eye fell upon Leon,

"What! is Colonel Alvarez seconded by a traitor?"

"I am seconded by a gentleman, which is more than my opponent can say," quickly returned the Spanish colonel; but then Leon's deep voice broke in,

"Lieutenant Fanchon, we came here as seconds, not principals, and hence we must do our duty; but *afterward* I am wholly at your service."

The Spaniard bit his lip in anger, but rejoined with sarcasm,

"I've a mind to punish you for your impudence."

"So be it; now to our duties," and Leon and he walked one side to agree upon the terms for the duel.

All preliminaries were now arranged, the twelve paces stepped off, and pistols loaded, for Colonel Alvarez, as the challenged party, had chosen them as the weapons best suited to him in his convalescent state, well knowing his strength would not be equal to a combat with swords, and that from his adversary he need expect no mercy, as his excellent swordsmanship and cruel nature were well known.

The two men took their stands, the one eager and threatening, determined to avenge a brother's blood, although that brother had been justly punished for a crime toward the one who slew him; the other was calm, stern, and his face rather sad than revengeful, as he coolly gazed upon the man before him.

Perhaps he recalled, as he gazed, the time when years before he had thus stood with the brother of the man whom he was now meeting; and flying far away, memory took him to a lone mound in old Spain, his native land, beneath which rested the form of the man his hand had laid low in death.

All nature was beautiful; the trees and shrubs were green with life, the air was scented with the fragrance of flowers, birds sang merrily in the foliage, and the ocean had a hushed roar as it broke in silvery spray upon the pebbly beach; but soon the ominous voice of doom broke rudely on the air and scene; nature and her beauties were forgotten, only the terrible presence realized, only the expectant sound that must crash forth in madness, and send a soul before its Maker.

"Gentlemen, are you ready?"

The words were clear, cold and cutting, spoken in the even tones of Leon Delmont.

"I am," answered Captain Pancho, and a deadly light passed over his face, causing it to assume a sickly pallor.

"Yes," was the abrupt reply of Colonel Alvarez, accompanied by a slight bow, while his dark eyes never left the form of his adversary.

"Fire! One, two, three!"

During the last words it seemed an age, an agony of suspense; but ere the last sound died away two pistols flashed at once, the one sending its deadly bullet through the brain of Enrique Pancho, the other leaden messenger severing a dark curl from Leandro Alvarez's temple.

With his last breath a muttered curse, the spirit fluttered loose from its casket of clay, and Enrique Pancho was slain—slain by the man whose life he had sworn to take.

All gazed upon the dark, handsome face, with a rivulet of blood trickling across it, and at the manly form, growing cold beneath the icy touch of death, and a silence that was almost of the sepulchre rested upon the scene, for no word was spoken; the birds had ceased their singing, the winds no longer even sighed through the trees, and the roar of the surf was more like the requiem of an organ.

"Will Lieutenant Fanchon join his friend?"

All present started at the quick, stern tones as Leon Delmont's voice broke the silence, and his eye fell upon the Spanish officer of the Tampa.

Turning pale, Urban Fanchon for a moment spoke not, but recovering himself by an effort, he said, harshly:

"I believe I promised you punishment for your impudence."

"I but just reminded you of that promise."

"Well, now it cannot be, for you see I have no friend here; at another time—"

"None like the present, sir; Colonel Alvarez will see justice done you," and the look upon Leon's face grew darker with anger, for he was now determined to meet the lieutenant and attempt to make him suffer for the cruelties he had wrought upon defenceless Cubans.

Perhaps another feeling also animated the heart of Leon; he knew that Lieutenant Fanchon was each day in the presence of Elinor Vanloo, that he loved her with all the ardor of his base nature, and was determined, if in his power, to force her to become his wife, for Captain Vanloo really liked his first officer.

"I could not ask a gentleman to second me who has just slain my lamented friend," returned the naval officer with a bow toward Colonel Alvarez.

"I observe Señor Sanchez in the cutter," suggested Leon.

"He is but a midshipman, and—"

"Señor Fanchon, *you are a coward!*"

Stung to madness by the epithet, as well as by the peculiar smiles resting upon the lips of Colonel Alvarez and Itervan Alvente, the naval officer seized a sword from the cas lying upon the ground, and sprang toward Leon, who was unarmed.

"Hold, assassin!" and with a bound Colonel Alvarez drew his own sword and struck the weapon of Lieutenant Fanchon from his grasp.

"If you have the courage to meet a man, do so as a man," said the angry officer.

Foaming with rage the lieutenant called out to Midshipman Sanchez to come to him, and between the youth and Itervan arrangements were soon made, the parties to meet with swords.

Each principal took his stand, Fanchon trembling with suppressed emotion, Leon cool and smiling, but with something deadly and mocking in his smile, for life was at stake in the game before them.

The word was given; the bright blades crossed, and the duel commenced, each antagonist bent on the death of the other.

From the first it was seen that the Cuban was the better swordsman, and before his attack the Spaniard steadily gave ground, step by step, until he could go no farther, and then brought to bay, he fought with fury and at the same time skill.

But Leon Delmont was dealing with a merciless tyrant, and he showed no mercy to him, but drove his sword entirely through the body of the Spaniard, who, with a cry of mingled rage, despair, fright and pain, fell back into the arms of the beardless midshipman.

"Will he die?" asked Leon, as Colonel Alvarez arose from examining the wound.

"I think it is not mortal; here, let me staunch the blood and dress the wound, and get him aboard ship as soon as possible,' returned the colonel, and then he added in a softer voice.

"I suppose you will look after the body of Captain Pancho?"

"I will, senor; this has been a sad day's work," returned the midshipman, who throughout had shown nerve and discretion beyond his years.

"I will call my boat's crew to aid me; good-morning, senors," he continued, and waving an adieu, the Spanish officer and his Cuban friends mounted their horses and rode away, passing in their path the grave of the soldier whom Leon had slain weeks before.

Narrowly Colonel Alvarez gazed into Leon's face as all looked upon the spot, for in his own mind he felt assured that his two companions knew something of that night's deed; but no sign of betrayal of any knowledge of who had caused that new-made mound, rested upon the stern, handsome features of the young patriot.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 61.)

St. Leger's Love;

OR,

THE SIEGE OF STANWIX.

A Romance of the Revolution.

BY BURR THORNBURY,

AUTHOR OF "RAVENSWOOD," "SKALK, THE SCOUT," "AGNES AYRE," &C.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A BOLD BUT NECESSARY MOVEMENT.

As may be inferred from the foregoing chapter, several days had elapsed since Edith Seymour had been conveyed to the shelter of the secret cave. The time would, of course, have passed monotonously, and drearily even, had it not been for the society of her rescuers, and the cheerful and uncomplaining spirit with which she accepted the necessity of such protracted concealment. While others were fighting, suffering and dying, or remained captives in the hands of cruel foes, Edith was not one to repine at her situation, but was grateful rather that she had been so providentially rescued, and so securely hidden from pursuers afterward.

It was not her present lot that distressed her, but anxiety for others—for her dear friends, Mrs. Livingston and Col. Sayton, for little Gertie, for the gallant garrison of Stanwix and for her country.

All these anxieties wore upon her, the more because her health was yet unrestored; and her lover, with deep concern, saw that a much longer stay in their present safe but unsalubrious quarters, would, in all probability, result in fresh physical prostration.

He had noted this with a keener eye than Kopinall, who was anxious for the time to come when Edith could be removed to better surroundings, but who had not once expressed an apprehension of her suffering a relapse. Lionel had intended, the evening Dyke had gone to meet Peter Coot at the Oaks, to broach the subject of a removal of their fair charge to a more healthful locality—even if the change necessitated a wide detour to enable them to reach one of the lower settlements—but the scout, he knew, would be loth to entertain the proposition, unless illness seemed inevitable, and so nothing had been said.

But, after Dyke's departure, he regretted that he had not spoken.

An alarming stupor, from which she in vain endeavored to wholly arouse herself, fell upon the uncomplaining girl. It was like that which had preceded her first sickness, only less serious.

"This confinement is trying to you, dear Edith," he said in tones that showed his forebodings. "You are not so well this evening. The atmosphere of this place is quite unfit for you to breathe; you need freer air and sunshine."

"I do think I am not quite myself to-night, dear Lionel," she returned with an effort at brightness. "But do not permit yourself to be alarmed; I shall be better to-morrow."

"If you only dare venture outside I would not feel so concerned. The open air and light are all you need, I think, to continue your convalescence. But here the temperature is unseasonable, and I believe it would be less dangerous, Edith, to endeavor to make our way to some other refuge than to remain where we are."

"Then you think that I—"

"Do not in turn be alarmed," he said very tenderly, but gravely. "But I know you are brave, my darling, and so I will speak just what I think: If you are compelled to stay here another day or two you will become ill; but, if you leave, that calamity will be averted. What if you were to be stricken again as you lately were! Oh, Edith! I dare not entertain the thought. There are a thousand perils outside, but a chance of avoiding them also. Would that I had spoken to Dyke concerning you; but he was anxious to go back to the fort to-night, and I did not wish to embarrass him.

"Oh, I would not, dear Lionel, have had him delayed on my account. He bears important news to the garrison."

"Yes; but he owed his first duty to you, especially since poor Beck has been slain. Dyke is gone, however, and may not return for some time."

"He may never return," sighed the fair girl.

"True; but the probability is that he will. But he will not find us here, dear Edith; we must attempt for your sake to reach a safer spot. We can leave in writing an explanation of our absence, and Dyke can remain to—to assist my mother when the hour arrives."

The voice of the speaker trembled painfully.

"Dear Lionel," said Edith in the same tremulous tone, "had we not better remain, and let what will come to me? The movement you propose, if successful, will take you far from her."

"There are true ones watching to rescue her."

"Shall we abandon the cave to-night, then?"

"If we could only obtain horses—or a single horse even—I should want to be off at once. Dyke discovered, you remember, that there are horses at the stables of Captain Hoyt. To seize an animal or two would be an act needing no justification. If you do not object to remaining alone here, my darling, I think I can dispossess the tory of a couple of his steeds. Shall I leave you, Edith?"

"Do as you think best; but oh, be very careful. If you should—"

"Hark!" at this moment exclaimed the lieutenant warningly.

"What was it?" asked Edith, alarmed and listening.

"I thought I heard a movement outside; our signal-call, too."

"It must be Dyke."

The signal was repeated, and immediately afterward a dripping form burst through the cave-front and stood beside them, crying:

"Don't be scared; it's me."

Both Edith and Lionel recognized the voice instantly.

"It is Beck!" they exclaimed, overjoyed and amazed. "We thought you dead," continued the young man; "killed at the front of the cave."

"Nary kill," answered the scout. "I found I was a goner, and so I guv up to see if they'd let me off as a prisoner. They did, for they wanted to finish me at the stake. I've just guv 'em the slip from that; and now I'm at your service again."

"But you were certainly wounded before you were taken?" said Lionel.

"I was that, young man, you may bet, or I wouldn't ha' been nabbed just then. But a bullet or two is nothin' fur me to carry—except as they interferes with my runnin' abilities—and I didn't die because of them. And now what's the situation? Where's Kopinall? What's next to be done? I'm a leetle stiff, and, as you'll see by daylight, I've lost my top-knot—"

Edith and Lionel uttered a simultaneous exclamation of horror.

"You do not mean to say you were scalped?" asked the latter.

"I do, by the big bull of Bashan. (Your pardon, Miss Edith.) I don't know whether to be ashamed or proud of it. I didn't lose much hair, for the job was bungled a little in my favor. But you didn't answer what I asked."

Lionel, especially as he felt the necessity of expeditious action, rapidly ran over the occurrences of the last few days, expressing his fears of a return of sickness to Edith, and ending with the statement that he had been on the point of sallying out and endeavoring to procure horses for a ride for the lower settlements.

"You stay here awhile with Miss Edith," directed the scout. "Since you think it best for us to leave this snug hole, I'll get the hosses, and in just a leetle more than no time. I'm some on that kind of a bargain with a tory, and as we're to have a long stretch to overcome, I'll try my nicest to get the pick of them beasts to help us." So saying he was gone.

His appearance had been so like that of an apparition, and his departure so speedy that when he had passed out, Lionel turned toward Edith, feeling very much as if what had just occurred was nothing more than a phantasm. But he recalled her condition, and said soothingly:

"Try to compose yourself, my darling, until the return of our friend. Your languor, I observe, is gone, and no wonder, startled as we both were by the appearance of him we thought dead. Even an hour's repose will be beneficial."

The weary girl lay down on the couch of skins, and Lionel kept anxious watch over her while the return of the scout was awaited.

An hour went by—another—and yet Beck did not come.

"I must be patient," thought the young man. "I know that haste will not answer in such an enterprise as Beck has undertaken. He must proceed very cautiously, and may have to wait and watch for hours before an opportunity to seize the animals is offered."

About midnight the signal that informed him of the ranger's presence was heard, and in a moment Beck entered the cave. Edith had fallen into a deep slumber, and was not aroused by his entrance.

"What success?" whispered Lionel, anxiously.

"The very best," was the cheerful rejoinder. "I was a long while about it; but I got a couple of hosses that Alexander the Great might have been satisfied with. Cap'n Hoyt—the tory thief—has a stable full of critters—some of 'm his neighbors'; bad 'em stole for him, you know, when the settlement was cleaned out. The door of the stable was locked, but you see, lieutenant, I'd been in that old barn afore, and I knowed another way out, which suited me better, too, since it was in the rear. A crazy old entry led from the back part o' the stables to out-doors, and I managed to get the beasts along that. Hoyt wasn't calculatin' on Rufus Beck a troublin' his establishment, I reckon, or else he'd ha' boarded up that back passage. But I'm the man fur tight places, I am; and the hosses is ourn."

"And we must lose no time in mounting them, and leaving this vicinity. Do you suppose any of the savages are prowling near?"

"I think not; they've lots o' trouble among themselves just now—that is with their tory and British brothers, and they give themselves purty much up to quarrelin'."

"Then we will venture out at once."

Edith was gently aroused, enveloped in the protecting sheet, and in a very brief period the three had left the cave. It was almost with a feeling of regret that the two younger ones abandoned it—the spot was so romantic, and had afforded such safe concealment; but the necessity was imperative.

Before passing out, Lionel with a piece of soft stone had written in large characters on the smoothest side of the cave, where it would be easily seen, the following words, addressed to Dyke Kopinall in case he should return:

"Must leave the cave on Edith's account. Beck not killed, as we supposed. Horses obtained by him, and a dash to be made for the lower settlements. Rescue my mother, if possible, and God bless you. L. LIVINGSTON."

"This way," aspirated Beck as he commenced the ascent of the river-bank. The way was rough and tangled, but after some exertion the top of the bluff was gained.

"Softly now," again breathed the scout. "I don't think there's an Injun about, but we'll proceed just as if there was a tribe of 'em. Wait a bit here in the shadders while I see if our nags is where I left 'em."

Lionel and his fair companion paused, while Beck went ahead to ascertain if everything was right.

"How do you feel, Edith?" murmured her lover in tenderest solicitude.

"Better," she responded. "This air is so sweet and refreshing."

"And do you think that you can endure the rough ride we have in the prospective."

"Oh, yes; and enjoy it. The change will be exhilarating. Only I feel that we are going so far from—from—"

"From my mother you would say," continued the young officer as in her emotion she hesitated painfully. A tremor that he could not subdue was in his own voice.

"Heaven will protect her," he said. "When the hour comes, a way, I feel, will open for her deliverance. Till then, dear Edith, name her no more, save in your prayers. I am almost maddened by the knowledge of her situation; I think of her constantly; but it seems to be my duty to care for you. Others as faithful and perhaps more efficient will assist her. I must *forget* her now if I can—you understand me, Edith?"

"Yes, yes," she murmured; and then was silent. She understood him well.

Beck now rejoined them, announcing that the horses were still undisturbed where he had tethered them.

"It's a considerable distance to 'em," he said, "but I couldn't bring 'em nearer for the rocks."

Supported by her lover, Edith with little difficulty ascended the rough way. The horses were soon reached and immediately mounted. Only one of the animals was saddled, and this was taken by Lionel and Edith. The scout expressed himself as quite satisfied with the more primitive way of riding.

"Are we ready to move?" inquired he.

The lieutenant responded in the affirmative.

"Then here we goes. You've got a good, gentle critter, I think; strong and swift too. Where we'll fetch up of course we don't know, but if Miss Edith can only manage to hold out for the next twelve hours I hopes to find friends. Follow me close, lieutenant, and don't let nothing but my dead body turn or stop you. We want to go through, we do, you know. We'll give yonder camp a wide sweep, and strike in for the river afterward. If we run afoul of ary tory—they're stopping every man they meet, since St. Leger's comin' made 'em so bold—all we have to do is pop him over and gallop on. Hip! Limber-legs! I reckon that ain't your name, but it'll do for the occasion."

The latter portion of his remarks was of course addressed to his horse.

Through the silent summer woods, as rapidly as possible they made their way, continuing their progress with little interruption save by natural obstacles, until the dawn began to color in the sky, and they paused to make observations. Then, with more caution than they had been exercising, their flight was resumed.

Their course lay through a region chiefly wilderness, though occasionally signs of civilized occupancy were to be seen. Beck was well acquainted with the whole district—having, in the capacity of hunter and frontiersman, more than once traversed it in less turbulent times. Therefore the party felt no fear that the wide detour they were making would cause them to lose their direction. A few mistakes had been made before the light of day made plain their path, but these had been rectified without any serious bewilderment.

Provisions had been brought with them from the stock Dyke Kopinall had accumulated at the cave; but even if food had not been thus provided they would not have starved. It was berry season; and with these and the pure wild water for their drink, they did well for the emergency. Rufus Beck declared that blackberries were prime fighting food for him, if he was not confined to such diet too long; and all ate of the wholesome fruit to repletion.

Edith, as Lionel noted most joyfully, bore the fatigue of riding without giving any evidence of ill-effects. Indeed she brightened wonderfully as day advanced; her physical depression was thrown off, and the danger of a recurrence of her former illness seemed entirely averted. But for the thought of the friends they had left behind them, she would have been quite elated.

The three pursued their way with the same steadiness and caution that had characterized their movements since daybreak, until the sun was high in the heavens. Then they again halted, as the heat, even in the shade of the forest, was oppressive, and their horses had become somewhat jaded.

"I don't suppose we're in any particular danger just at present," remarked Beck, as they sat resting by the side of a moss-throated rill that rippled from a spring just above them. "But we must not count too big on being let alone. Small parties of the Injuns are passing back and forth continually, and they might strike our trail and think it worth follerin'. I reckon Mr. Cap'n Hoyt won't trouble us, for he's down with the army, helpin' on with the fuss. They're havin' a time among themselves, as I've already told you, lieutenant; that's why the reds didn't roast me, as they intended to, instead of givin' me a chance to break. They never let up on any one who wears their paint and feathers without their leave, as you and me has done; but builds for such, when they nab 'em, just the slowest-burnin' fire that can be kindled. But you see they was all mad at each other, and I wasn't attended to. I got tired o' waitin', and so left 'em."

"The rupture among the enemy is then quite as serious as Dyke Kopinall believed?" asked Lionel, hopefully; for he knew that the disagreements of the besiegers would tell in favor of the patriots.

"There's no mistake but that the rumpus is lively—so much the better for the garrison. St. Leger first put on too many airs to suit that proud old thief, Brant; and next—as I heard just a whisper of—he was a little too early for Colonel John of the Greens."

"I hope Dyke got through safe last night," continued their companion, giving expression to a thought which had a hundred times risen in the mind of each. "We needn't be concerned for him, though; he always does what he marks out to do, with just the least splatter of any man I know of. There's this difference betwixt him and me, lieutenant, as I don't doubt you've observed yourself—Dyke comes out of a tight place head foremost, and all in trim—while it's *my* luck to be more or less damaged. But I always *have* come out yet, and that's better than doin' worse."

"All's well that ends well," rejoined Lionel, cheerily. "You suffered rather severely this last time, though."

"Yes," said the scout, with a flush almost of shame rising to his painted cheeks. "To be scalped by a tory Injun! I'm a little afeerd of the boys runnin' me hard about that when I see 'em again—if I ever *do*, seein' it's not a certain sure thing—but *you* will help me convince em that I lost my top-knot fair, won't you, lieutenant?"

"Indeed I will, my brave friend; no man shall attempt to ridicule you because of your misfortune," answered the young officer quickly, knowing in what contempt the rough rangers of the border would hold even the most daring of their number if he should suffer as Beck had, without the most indubitable proof that such a loss had been incurred in the honorable endeavor to aid others. "You might have saved yourself, I well know, by plunging through the cascade-front to the cave; but it would have been at the risk of revealing our hiding-place to our foes, and exposing us all to death. Never fear, Beck, no brave man will dare to attempt to cast disgrace upon you when the facts are known; and as to the cowards—"

"Who would be the first to try it!" interrupted the scout.

"Yes; but we will silence the cowards—Edith and I."

"Thank you, lieutenant; thank you both. To tell the truth, I've worried considerble about losin' my hair—I can stand fire and wounds and freezin' and roastin' and starvin' and everything of that sort, but I can't stand ridicule, and if it warn't for such witnesses as you and Miss Edith and Dyke, I swear I'd never want to see civilization again. I thought about all this when I was in the hands of the red-skins, and at one time I had about concluded a man with a hole cut in the top of his scalp warn't worth savin'. I did, I swow."

"We rejoice that you came to a wiser conclusion," said Edith, with a smile, such as fair women bestow upon brave men; "otherwise we should have lost a most honored friend, and the army and the cause one whose place could not be readily filled."

Though the gallant fellow was uneasy under these words of deserved compliment, delivered by one so fair, yet it was evident that he was pleased to hear them, for he had really felt humiliated by the indignity he had endured, and needed a little reassuring praise.

He knew that to his companions he presented, personally, rather a ludicrous appearance. He had been stripped of his Indian garb while in the hands of his captors, and was now attired in the most nondescript apparel possible to imagine; the paint had been partly rubbed from his cheeks, showing only in streaks and blotches; a dark bruise disfigured his forehead; he wore no covering on his head, and where once his long black hair had been combed and fastened in a top-knot that any young brave might have envied, now showed a round, gory spot that had been made by the knife of the savage who had robbed him of his luxuriant tuft. But, notwithstanding his somewhat forlorn aspect, he was still Rufus Beck the scout, brave, faithful, sensitive and modest, and as full of latent fight as the air above him was of sunshine.

After the horses had been sufficiently rested, their riders remounted and moved briskly away from the spot. No sign of enemies had heretofore been visible, but soon Beck declared that his horse "smelt Injun." The animal had pricked up its ears and began snuffing the air in a manner often exhibited by some of its species, with which dislike and dread of the red race is constitutional.

Beck, decidedly alarmed, paused and dismounted. Motioning his companions to halt also, holding his horse by the rein, he glanced apprehensively around as if he expected the immediate appearance of a foe.

Suddenly he sprang to the back of his steed, and, wheeling, called to Edith and Lionel in low warning tones:

"Back! back! we've found company we won't jine. Injuns as sure as snakes!"

At the same moment almost, several shots rang through the wood, and wild, eager yells announced that our friends had been discovered.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DYKE AT THE FORT.

Dyke Kopinall, with the cautious daring that characterized him as a scout, had made his way through the besieging lines, and with the first faint glow of dawn found himself close to the parapets of the fort, unseen either by foes or friends. He desired now to announce his presence to the latter, but, being in Indian garb, was a little fearful that the first sight of him might draw the fire of some over-prompt sentinel, imagining an enemy was near.

From where he was ensconced he could hear the tread of the guard and the murmur of voices, but could see none of the garrison.

"I wonder if they would pop me over without challenge if they caught a glimpse of me?" muttered he under his breath. "Some of those fellows are mighty spry with a gun when there's no particular use for being so. But I must get in soon, or eyes on the other side will find me. Hallo! you, up there!"

The nearest sentry paused as he heard the cry, apparently in doubt as to whether it came from the outside or inside of the fort.

"Don't fire if you see a red-skin," continued Dyke. "It's a friend in that disguise. It's Kopinall, and he wants to get in."

"All right," returned the sentinel. "Lie low, and I'll call an officer."

"You may guess I will lie low, and without any of your suggestion," said the scout to himself. "Daylight's coming like a tide, and there's little between me and the enemy's sentries but a few flimsy shadows. Hurry up there, man!"

"Easy a moment," was the reply. "We're about to open the gate. It can't be done in a second. Watch close, and spring in as soon as the way is clear. You'll have bullets for company if you lose any time."

"Just as if I didn't know that," returned Dyke impatiently. "Do you forget who you're talking to, man?"

"Now!" shouted a quick voice.

The scout leaped from his recumbent position—which he had been forced to take for concealment—and in an instant was through the open portcullis.

A ringing cheer greeted him from those there assembled, to which he replied with one of his peculiar border shouts.

The gate was quickly closed behind him, but none too soon, for the vigilant watchers of the foe had discovered what was going on, and a volley of balls came spattering against the walls and gate of the fort.

"Hurrah for Kopinall! Hurrah for Mohawk Dyke!" were the cries that arose as the gallant ranger responded to the first greeting he had received.

"Enough of that, boys," he now said. "Where's the colonel? I must see him."

"This way, my brave fellow," spoke a cheery, manly voice. It was Gansevoort himself who had approached. "I rejoice to see you. Come to my quarters, and I'll hear what you have to say."

Dyke saluted the commandant most respectfully, and accompanied him from the spot.

When the privacy of the colonel's quarters was reached, as may be supposed, Dyke did not delay in producing the communication he had received through others from Mrs. Livingston.

Gansevoort read the note with eager haste, and an eye brightening as he proceeded. The scout closely watched the expression of his colonel's countenance, and was satisfied that the contents of the paper were of the utmost interest and value.

As he finished reading it Colonel Gansevoort grasped the hand of the ranger, saying, with unmistakable emotion,

"You deserve a commission—a reward by Congress—the thanks of the garrison and the whole country, for your service in bringing us this paper. We are very hard pressed, but this would encourage us to hold out even if we were on the very verge of starvation. There is confusion—worse than confusion—in the camp of our foes; insubordination; overweening confidence on the part of some, and unjustifiable despondency on the part of others. St. Leger is blinded, obstinate and incorrigible. He has quarrelled with Johnson, and his Indian allies have chiefly deserted him. Everything works in our favor. If Willett and Stockwell only half succeed, we shall yet beat the invaders back, and Burgoyne will have no help from this quarter. I look for the appearance of reinforcements daily, and then St. Leger will find that things are easier said than done."

"Well, I'm glad to hear you speak so cheery, colonel. *I* haven't been counting on the fall of this old fort, but you mightn't be able to hold out if everything went steady against you; and so Lord bless the woman who's done so much to turn the tide."

"It is owing to her in great part, I do not doubt," said Gansevoort with grave thoughtfulness, "though she doesn't say so explicitly."

"There's something under it all that I don't understand," continued the scout; "but of one thing I'm certain—she has shorn St. Leger of his strength as completely as Delilah did Samson."

Gansevoort looked more thoughtful than before. At length he said:

"But what of *her*, when the crash comes, as come soon I now believe it must? She will be in danger then—in greater peril than you or I could be placed, Dyke."

"Yes; but she has friends on the look-out to help her. Peter Coot and Jack Cleavers are there, and would have had her from the camp before this, only that she refused to leave."

"Refused to leave! What! when she had an opportunity?"

"Yes, sir."

"I begin to comprahend," said Gansevoort, "knowing all that I learned from Colonel Sayton and Lieutenant Livingston. Does the young man, do you think, fully understand this momentous matter?"

"Yes, sir," answered Dyke, confidently.

"And where is he now?"

"I left him with Miss Seymour at a safe hiding-place in the rear of the enemy's camp."

"Miss Seymour has been rescued then?" asked the colonel, eagerly.

"Lord! yes; I forgot you didn't know. There's so much to tell."

"This will be joyful news to her friend, the old colonel."

"And to lots of others," added the scout, suggestively.

"Of course, Miss Seymour is a noble young lady, and has rendered important service to the cause. You have succeeded better than I dared anticipate in effecting her rescue and in holding communication with Mrs. Livingston—God bless her!"

"And you'll give me leave to go back to the camp to-night to see what further I can do?"

"Certainly, if you so desire. What has become of your former comrade, Beck?"

Dyke looked very sad as he answered:

"Beck, the lieutenant thinks, is done for. The red-skins got their hands on him heavy; but, though I didn't whisper it to the young man, I don't give him up entirely till I see his body or what's left of it. Beck has been killed once or twice before, and come to life unexpected. This time, though, I'm afraid he's gone for good; yet it wouldn't surprise me a bit to see him crawl into this old pile, with an ear gone maybe, or a few quarts of blood lost, but not damaged beyond repair."

"I trust he is not slain," said the colonel, "for we can't pick up such as he any day."

Nothing delights the true frontiersman more than to hear praise of his class, though no one is more uneasy under direct expressions of compliment. What a mighty incentive to exertion is this love of praise! The highest and the humblest are alike sensible to it, let them affect whatever indifference they may. So the honest soul of Dyke Kopinall was refreshed by the praiseful words of his superior, bestowed upon another.

"And now, my friend," continued Gansevoort, "you may retire and rest yourself awhile—I know that even a ranger needs occasional repose—and after that I will call a council of my officers and have you present. You can doubtless give us some further information which you have obtained yourself. You may ask to be directed to Colonel Sayton, if you choose, and acquaint him with the fact of Miss Seymour's safety, but don't let him detain you too long."

Dyke, with a parting salute, left the commandant's quarters, and inquired for Colonel Sayton, who, it seemed, had not yet learned of his return to the fort. He was soon in the presence of the aged officer, who, as may readily be imagined, was rejoiced to see the gallant fellow. The particulars of the interview it is not necessary to state.

When the council met, Dyke was present, and so confirmed the information that had been sent by Mrs. Livingston, that every one was encouraged to think that in a few days at the furthest the fate of Stanwix would be decided, and decided gloriously for the garrison.

Dyke rested during the greater part of the day, but when night descended he again left the fort in his old disguise, accompanied by another gallant spirit, to be ready to assist in the rescue of the noble woman around whom perils were gathering thicker than before.

CHAPTER XXV.

A WILD RIDE—STORM-CAUGHT.

With the cries of their savage pursuers sounding in their ears, and with bullets flying around them and overhead, cutting twigs and leaves loose from the branches, Lieutenant Livingston, Beck and their fair companion sped through the forest depths.

Fortunately there was little undergrowth to impede their progress, after they had passed from the thicket-covered spot where their foes had been encountered; but of course their horses could not proceed with the swiftness that a more open country would have allowed.

"Cling closer to me, Edith," encouraged Lionel, imagining that he felt her grasp relaxing in her terror. "Their balls have not struck near us yet—they fire wildly. They have only caught glimpses of our flying forms. We will soon elude them, I trust."

Beck, as at first, took the lead, which he of necessity did, as he only was fully acquainted with the region and knew what direction promised best; but he cast many a quick and anxious glance behind to see that his friends still closely followed, and that they were unhurt.

The savages, though on foot, did not appear inclined to give up the chase.

Emerging after a time from the woods, the fugitives entered upon a cleared space of considerable elevation, beyond which the forest wall again showed lofty and green.

"Now's our time to throw the balance against 'em," called the scout, checking his steed as he gained the open spot and permitting his companions to come abreast of him. "I ain't got much hair to fly, but I want what there is to be stirred lively. Here we go!"

And with that they were off, swifter than ever. Their horses were already reeking with foam, but the noble creatures seemed to know what was required of them, and did their best to bear their riders from their foes.

"We must gain the further side," thought Beck, "before them yelpers reach the edge of the clearin', or they'll have a shot at us fair. Hip-yah! my skimmer! do your limberest now. That's fine; I've heerd of winged beasts, but your legs are almost as good!"

The scout was again apostrophizing his horse, and with little exaggerated praise. With that steady, breathless effort that well-trained animals show, the two steeds bore their riders across the exposed upland to the shelter beyond.

Not a moment too soon was the line of forest passed, for, as the wood was entered, a shot or two from the guns of the foremost pursuers, who had caught sight of the disappearing forms of our friends, struck with an ominous thud against a tree.

"So far, good," remarked Beck, panting with the excitement of the ride; "but it's too early to brag. We've gained a neat strip, but ain't out of rifle-shot yet. Here we go again!"

Their flight was resumed and continued steadily for another hour, when the three congratulated themselves that their enemies had been left a considerable distance behind, and that in all probability the pursuit had been abandoned. But nothing was presumed on, so far as relaxation of their vigilance went, though it had become necessary to give their horses rest after such long exertion.

"How far are we from the river, do you suppose?" inquired Lionel of Beck.

"Only a little distance. Do you see yonder hump-backed hills through the wood?" He pointed to a range of hills to be seen from the point of view they occupied, and which might aptly be described by the words he had used.

"Yes," said the young man.

"Well, the river is between them and us."

"Indeed; we cannot be far from settlements then."

"No; and we might strike for them now if it weren't for a fear that Brant is to be found hereabouts. If he really intended to attack them, and no mistake—that is if he hasn't got over his mad and gone back to help St. Leger—there's no doubt that smoke will soon be smelled in this neighborhood."

"Then we had better not venture upon a descent to the valley yet?"

"That's my opinion."

"And you know best. I was thinking only of Edith."

"How do you stand this rough ridin', Miss Edith?" inquired the scout, kindly.

"Very well, I think. I am of course tired and excited; but it is better to be here than in the place we left."

"Sich knockin' about as this does for tough old stocks like me—I must call myself old, seein' I'm *bald*—but for you, Miss Edith, I rather think it is not the thing."

"Don't you acknowledge that I have borne myself quite heroically under the circumstances?" she asked archly.

"That I do," he answered gallantly, and then seeing a chance for a joke, continued humorously: "Only you won't claim that you have *borne yourself* for, if that's so, what has these here hosses been doin'?"

Both Edith and Lionel laughed heartily at his joke, poor as it was, though their merriment was not occasioned so much by it as by the reaction that followed the lessening of the strain to which their nerves had lately been subjected.

"I ain't much of a philosopher," resumed their rude companion, whose mood was quite that of their own, "except so far as relates to hosses themselves. I allays did believe that hoss natur has a little somethin' in it quite as our'n as human natur. Now, Miss Edith, do you think them critters would ha' took us across that clearin' in the time they did, if they hadn't 'a' knowed *you* was along?"

"Why, yes; and in even a briefer period," said the fair girl, smiling at the earnestness with which he presented his conceit.

"But they wouldn't though," persisted he. "The young man and me alone couldn't ha' got that much run out of 'em."

"I am sure I am doubly grateful then to the noble animals, and would like them to know it."

"They do; you may stand on that," declared Beck, with admiring glances directed alternately at the lovely girl and the horses. "About the most interestin' things," he muttered, "that the Creator ever turned out are, in my opinion, a fine hoss and a pretty gal; and they goes well together."

"Had we not better proceed again?" asked Lionel, who was growing a little uneasy at the lengthened pause that had been made. "Perhaps we can reach a point ere nightfall from which it would be safe to descend into one of the settlements. I do not like the idea of remaining until morning in the woods."

"Better the forest than an attacked settlement," said Edith, as they remounted. "The night will be warm and pleasant."

"With, perhaps, a thunder-storm ere daybreak. I would much prefer to have you under roof," rejoined Lionel, anxiously.

"We will keep near the river," said Beck as they moved off, "so that if we don't see nothin' to warn us back, we can dip down to the valley in a little time. We shall find it mighty uncertain goin' at this distance from the main road, but maybe we can find a way."

They therefore pursued their course along the highlands that overlooked the narrow valley, reaching now and then an elevation that afforded a sweeping view of the country at their feet. They beheld single houses, and occasionally groups, that had thus far escaped the torch of the invaders, though no signs of human occupancy were visible. The inhabitants, doubtless, fearing a raid by Brant and his savage followers, had retired to the protection of the forts. How near the Indians were if they had continued their advance down the river, it was impossible for our friends to determine. Looking back up the valley from the summit of a bluff they had gained, they saw, or imagined they saw, a smoke-cloud rising in the afternoon light, and marking the scene of a burning village.

Of this they were not sure, for the distance was considerable, and the climbing shadows they had noticed mingled darkly with a background of cloud. But of one thing they were certain—a storm was rising. The uplifting curling mass might be nothing more than the scud flying in the tempest's front, as is often to be observed as a thunder-storm, accompanied with a strong wind, advances.

"Your apprehension of a storm was well-founded," said Edith to her lover. "The day has been so quiet that I had not thought of such a thing."

"A deceitful quiet, Edith. We must look for shelter now, for you must not be exposed to the coming tempest. You have endured too much already. Don't you think we had better seek the lower road at once, and enter one of yonder houses?"

The question was addressed to Beck.

"Yes," answered he, decisively. "We're to have a heavy blow, and it wouldn't be neither safe nor pleasant here. Besides, everything looks peaceable below there, though I wouldn't trust to that in ordinary. We'll be careful; and I reckon we won't be disturbed afore mornin' at least. And now for the village, or the storm 'll get there first."

Turning again to gaze up the valley, they saw that the clouds were indeed swiftly driving up the sky. The sun was obscured, and a deep gloom fell upon the earth.

"We must hasten," said Lionel, as they headed their horses for the river road.

Gaining this, a rapid gallop soon brought them to the upper portion of the village. They did not stop there, but passed on to the centre, where they dismounted in front of a rude but comfortable-looking dwelling, entrance to which they decided to make. The horses were hitched to a post that had been planted for that purpose, and hastening up the short walk that led to the door, upon reaching that, an unceremonious attempt to affect entrance was made. It proved futile, for the door was strongly barred. They hurried to the rear of the house, and there, without much difficulty or delay, forced a passage into a large outhouse or kitchen, from which communication was had with the main structure.

"Now for the horses!" cried Beck. "I'll fetch 'em right in here, so as to have 'em safe and handy."

The lieutenant conducted Edith to the adjoining apartment. A vivid flash of lightning came just as they entered, and a crashing thunder-bolt followed almost instantly.

"The storm has burst," spoke Lionel. "Thank God that we have such a shelter. Do you lie down, dear Edith, and I will see that our horses are cared for. Beck may have difficulty in inducing them to enter a human habitation."

He pointed to a high-backed settee, which stood on one side of the room, giving to the place a most home-like look. Edith took the couch, and then her lover hurried to assist the scout in disposing of the horses.

Beck had just arrived with the animals at the door of the out-building. Throwing the rein of one to Lionel, the latter seized it and led in the foremost horse, which was evidently a little surprised at being asked to enter such a place, but not in the least reluctant. The other followed, addressed thus in complimentary terms by the admiring Beck:

"You're a sensible critter, you are, and t'other ditto; doin' just what's required of ye, and askin' no questions. Now, if ye'd been as big fools as some humans, ye'd have stood outside and argued the perpriety of takin' this step until Rufus Beck would have consigned ye to the place where there's summer always, and a mighty sight hotter than this. Whoop—bang!"

This ejaculation was occasioned by a thunder-burst of extraordinary violence, that shook every timber of the house.

"This is worse nor the night we left the fort," continued the scout, addressing himself to Lionel. But the young man had rejoined Edith, and did not hear the remark. Beck, first giving another glance toward the horses, also passed into the next room.

Lionel was at the window, gazing upon the tempest.

There was little to be seen, for the driving floods of rain enveloped everything. The lightning flashed incessantly, and the thunder had now become one long monotonous roll.

"We've done well to drop in here," remarked the ranger, "for I don't think Miss Edith could have stood all this."

"I am very grateful, indeed, that we have been so favored."

"We have the whole village to ourselves, I believe, and just that circumstance makes me feel a little uneasy," spoke the scout, in tones that did not reach the ears of Miss Seymour.

"You fear, then," said Lionel, paling slightly as his glance was directed toward the reclining form of Edith, "that the place has been abandoned in anticipation of an attack?"

"It looks like it; and I'm uncomfortably sure that the cloud we spied from the bluff-top was got up independent of this here storm. It looked a picture from the ridge to see everything so quiet; yet I rather expected to find a few of the boldest villagers left here for all that. But I don't think there's anything alive hereabouts exceptin' ourselves and our hosses, unless it is a cat or two. We hav'n't investigated, to be sure, but I go by impression."

"Even if the savages are not many miles from us, they would hardly continue their advance on such a night, would they?" inquired Lionel.

"They might and then again they mightn't. It depends on what their mood and intentions is. If Brant thinks Stanwix is going to stand, and if he has had news of reinforcements comin' up the valley—which I think is more'n likely—he will naturally want to burn and plunder while he has a chance. He will make good use of his time, night and day, storm or quiet."

"And so you think our position is one of positive peril?"

"Well, as I said, I don't think we'll be disturbed much afore daylight; but we had better sleep with one eye and both ears open, and take early leave of this locality."

"Which we will do. And now I will see if I cannot find refreshments of some kind. This is a comfortable abode, and I do not doubt there are provisions in the cellar or the pantry. If so, I am sure we would be welcome to them. We need a change from Dyke's dried stores, and the berries and water—or rather an addition to the latter. You can kindle a fire for light, Dyke; there's tinder, I believe."

So saying, Lionel commenced an exploration of closets and cellar, the result of which search was the finding of an abundance of excellently prepared food that had been left behind when the late occupants of the house had departed.

Edith, who had fallen into the deep slumber of exhaustion, was gently aroused after a time, and invited to partake of the collation.

"What an unworthy being I am," she said with a lugubrious smile, as she surveyed the repast. "I am not only of no service in field and forest, but I permit myself to be forestalled in domestic matters."

"There, there, do not distress yourself, Edith, with such reflections," returned the young officer gayly. "You are practically on the sick list, and you must be content to see me invading woman's sphere of duty. Besides, any one ought to be able to get a supper after the viands are already prepared."

They made a merry meal, for they really enjoyed the sense of comfort that arose from their situation, notwithstanding the possible peril of their surroundings.

Toward midnight the storm ceased. Noting this, the watchful scout thought it would, perhaps, be best to proceed, as themselves and their horses had been rested and refreshed, and it was by no means certain that the place would be exempt from hostile visitation during the remainder of the night. He therefore proposed to Lionel that they at once resume their flight. This proposition met with immediate favor from both the young man and Edith—whose slumber had given way to wakefulness—and the three bestirred themselves to depart.

"I'll take a look around," said Beck, "before we venture out with the hosses. It's al'ays well to have a clear path."

Saying which, he glided from the house, and was soon lost to the view of his companions.

He was gone longer than they had supposed he would be. Fully fifteen minutes elapsed, and he did not return. Lionel began to apprehend that something serious had befallen him.

A sudden commotion outside informed the anxious ones that danger was indeed imminent.

"Open!" breathed a quick, excited voice at the door.

It was the scout's.

He was admitted, his panting eagerness informing them that he had startling news to communicate.

"The place is full of Injuns," he said, excitedly. "They've stolen in from both directions—up and down. Close the window that we opened in the other room, lieutenant, and I'll barricade the door. There's no gettin' away now."

Lionel flew to secure the single window that had been unfastened, and then returned to the out-building. Edith was still there.

"Another dreadful trial awaits you, my dear, dear one," he said sadly. "God grant you deliverance from this new peril."

"He has been merciful to us before; may He be again," she replied, without a tremor of her sweet, soft voice.

"Is the fire out on the hearth?" asked Beck suddenly, as if he had just remembered that.

"Yes," answered Lionel. "It burned down some time ago."

"They'll find us, of course, the red demons! but we won't guide 'em to us. This is bad, lieutenant, but we'll have to make the best of it now."

"Were you discovered?"

"No; but I had to dodge close and lie low to keep from bein' seen. That's what kept me so long. I was mortal afeerd the Injuns would get here first; but I managed to slip past them as was in my way. They're makin' things fly, and I reckon we'll soon have a call. Hark at the thieves!"

The noise attendant upon breaking in the closed dwellings, and the yells and cries of the red raiders, now became fearfully distinct. Fortunately, with the exception of our three friends, there were no human beings present to become the victims of the savages, and the scene lacked the horrors that would have been enacted had the village not been deserted.

"Could we not mount our horses and make a dash from here before they are aware of our presence?" asked Lionel anxiously, thinking of the dreadful prospect that awaited them if they remained.

"We'd be seen and shot sure," said Beck in a hopeless tone. "Besides—ah!"

A furious knock was heard at the front door.

"You don't come in there any more than we did," muttered the ranger. "Come around here and try; but if you get your ugly mug in it'll be bad for you. Give me your rifle, lieutenant."

The latter handed the scout his weapon. The out-building had also been attacked, blows on the door of which fell faster and heavier, and it was evident that such a determined assault must at last prove successful. One of the panels of the door had been broken through, as was to be known by the faint light that glimmered in, obstructed now and then by the body of the nearest assailant.

"I'd better make sure of that fellow," remarked Beck with ominous grimness, "and let the others know somebody's at home."

He raised his gun, and the moment the imprisoning light was again obstructed a terrific report followed.

A wild cry of mortal pain, yells of rage and exclamations of surprise without, the fierce neigh of the frightened horses, and a muttered expression of satisfaction from the scout within, succeeded the discharge of the weapon.

Then ensued a brief period of strange, trying silence.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 37.)

AGNES'S STORY.

BY ELLA WHEELER.

Agnes lay under the summer skies, dreaming a lazy dream. Her book lay on the grass beside her, open, but she had learned her lesson, and chose to dream an hour now, before going back to the house. The book was entitled "Voice Culture," and the lesson she had learned was on the training and exercising of the human voice. And Agnes was dreaming of a wonderful day when she should sing before a public audience, and be applauded. She was a little young creature, barely seventeen, the daughter of a mechanic in easy circumstances, and all her bright young life she had been looking forward to the day when she should sing in public.

Here had been a happy, bird-like life, free from care, and full of cheery things. Her mother had died when she was a wee thing—she could just remember her, and the childish sense of loss she experienced when she called "mamma," and was told she would never come again. But an aunt came to live with them, and stayed until her father married again. He married a kind-hearted, but worldly woman, who was very good to the little Agnes, and very proud of her musical talents which displayed themselves at an early day.

She encouraged the girl's ambition and energy, and urged her on to strive for preminence in the musical world, but she taught her nothing of the life beyond—said no word to her of the great Guiding Hand that is ready to direct all our steps, if we only reach out and take it.

But Agnes's life was a bright, pleasant one, and earth seemed such a delightful abiding-place, she thought she had no need of Heaven, or Heaven's help. She was like a bird singing all the day, with no thought of the morrow, save that the sun perchance would shine brighter still.

She thought no great trouble or danger could come into her life; she was so shielded and guarded by a loving, proud father, and a kind, indulgent woman—her stepmother—who was willing to take any burden upon herself, if need be, to save little Agnes a care, and give her time and means for improvement. She was so very proud of her husband's child—so anxious she should become a famous singer.

When Agnes went in, that summer day, she found her teacher there, and after singing and reciting her lessons to him he told her she had gone beyond him now, and must be sent away for further instruction. Then her parents were called in, and then came the bustle of preparation, and the sadness of parting, through which the sunshine of hope was smiling, albeit, and Agnes went away, accompanied by her old teacher, to a city some hundreds of miles distant. And there she remained two years, only coming home once.

But at the end of two years she came home, and it was announced that she was to sing in the Opera Hall one evening. The two years had not changed Agnes much. She had grown more mature and womanly, and she was dressed exquisitely, her dainty toilet displaying her youthful charms—for all that pertains to youth is charming—and rendering her bright and attractive to the eye. The hall was crowded. When she came on the stage she was greeted with rapturous applause. She bowed acknowledgement, and her eyes fell upon an upturned face. It was the face of Leonard Livingstone, the Mayor of C——, and a wealthy aristocrat. He had once been State Treasurer, and was very much looked up to by the citizens of C——. He was a proud, haughty man, grandly handsome, but holding himself far above the common class. A glow came into Agnes's pale cheeks as she saw his face upturned, watching her. Why, it was an honor that this man should come to hear her sing!

She sang gloriously. It was a great triumph for her, and she was loudly encored, and the morning papers gave her a flattering notice. She sat in her father's house the next day, dreaming over her triumph, when the bell rang. She rose and went to the door, and there stood Leonard Livingstone. She flushed and paled and trembled, holding out her hand, with a little surprised exclamation of welcome. He took her hand, and entered the room.

"I wanted to come and congratulate you," he said. "I had no opportunity last night. I cannot stop but a moment, but I just want to tell you that I was very, very proud of you. You sang gloriously, and you looked beautiful."

She caught her breath, and her cheeks flushed rose-red at such words from *him*. To be praised so by Leonard Livingstone, the proudest man in C——, why it was more than she had dreamed of!

He looked down into the flushed, eager young face that was fair with youth, health and hope. His eyes glowed and flushed, his hand closed over hers, he bent his head and kissed her on the lips.

"Good-bye," he said. "I must go now. My wife sent her congratulations and compliments. She meant to call, but was kept at home by a severe headache."

Then he was gone. Agnes stood in a maze. Why, she could hardly believe herself awake! Had Leonard Livingstone really been there—held her hand—praised her so—and kissed her lips? She flushed a little at that thought. But then he was so many years her senior, so far above her, that it was quite proper, only a greater honor than she had dreamed of.

A few days later he came again, with an offering of flowers—a magnificent bouquet, and an invitation for her to spend a few days in his princely home.

"My wife is exceedingly anxious to have you visit us," he said. "She will try and call to-day, and give you the invitation in person. She is much interested in you, and wants to know you better."

Mrs. Leonard Livingstone did call later in the day. A magnificent, queenly woman, with a proud, almost scornful face. But she was very gracious to the mechanic's daughter, and Agnes accepted her urgent invitation to come and spend a few days with her.

A week later she went. It was pleasant there. A princely home, flowers, pictures, music, books; quite unlike her own cosey home. Leonard Livingstone spent every evening in the parlors, listening to her wonderful voice, or talking with her. He would stroke her hair sometimes, in a gentle way, and once or twice he kissed her; but somehow he chose a time when his wife was not near. Agnes ought to have known then that it was not right. But she was so fond of admiration, so thoughtless, so blithe; and besides, he was such a grand man, it was an honor to be petted by him, and it would be very ungrateful and foolish, after his unbending so to her and being so kind, to stand upon her dignity. So she reasoned. And with every caress, his power over her grew stronger.

When she left his roof, she found herself thinking a great deal about him, thinking more of him than she had ever thought of any man before in all her life. He overtook her a few days later, she walking, he in his carriage alone, and he asked her to ride. She looked up at him, and somehow she could not say no. So she took her seat beside him, and instead of riding directly home, he drove far out of his way, to keep her with him longer. Leonard Livingstone had conceived an intense passion for this bright young creature of song. He did not conceal it from his own heart. He told himself that he loved her; but he was a married man, and if he had been a man of honor, he would have kept out of her presence then. Instead, he was accustomed to having his own way in this world, and he determined that she should love him.

She was going away soon—going back to continue her lessons. He called the day before her departure. He smiled a triumphant smile when he saw the tears fill her eyes, as she held out her hand to say good-bye. He smiled, and reached out his arms and drew her to his heart.

"Dear little girl—sweet little song-bird," he said, "I will not say good-bye. I am going on a journey to-morrow, that will take me your route. If you consent, I will be your escort."

She ought to have refused just then, but she was so lacking in any firm principles of right and wrong. She could not bear the thought of parting with him, and so she smiled, and said she would be glad of his company. She had no thought of any real wrong then. She knew that she cared a great deal for him, but she made herself believe it was all respect for his station and position, and she was dazzled with that no doubt. Had any ordinary man attempted such familiarities she would have been very indignant. Well, she went away, and he joined her at the depot. They travelled together, and he accompanied her to her destination.

"I want to see you to-morrow," he said, "when shall I come?"

She named an hour, and was all impatience till it came and brought him. He found her in the parlor alone, and he sat down and held her hands very closely, and mesmerized her with his wonderful eyes.

"I am going to speak plainly," he said, "I cannot be silent longer. I love you, and I know you love me. It may be wrong, but how can we help it. Wrong or right, we love each other. I *must* possess you, I cannot live without you. If you will consent, I will set sail for Italy next week. You shall accompany me—as my wife. No one need know over there that you are not. I have long contemplated a trip to Europe. I can arrange my business, and leave affairs with my wife, so even she will not suspect. You can write to your people that you have found it necessary to complete your studies in Florence, and that you wish to sail with some friends who are going, and cannot see them again before you go. No one will suspect our relations, there need be no disgrace. Oh! darling, you *must* say yes—you must go."

You must remember that this girl had lived a thoughtless, butterfly life, basking in the sunshine, with no thought of shadows. She had been petted and indulged, and was fond of praise and admiration, and the great height from which this proud man had stooped to love her, dazzled and bewildered her. His great magnetism had exerted a peculiar influence over her, and she was almost powerless in his hands. She was not wicked. But she had no religious training—indeed she had never said her prayers since her mother died. She thought her life was so bright and pleasant, that it was so easy to live, she had no need of prayer. But something hindered her from answering this man at once.

"Oh, wait until to-morrow," she said, "I cannot answer you now. Give me time to think."

And he could get no other answer from her then.

After he went away, she passed up to her room, like one in a dream. She was in a strange maze—a half delirious ecstacy, which the thought of being with him produced. Yet a cold, frightened feeling was over her at the same time. She sat so for hours, scarcely moving. It grew dark, and she could hear people going to their rooms—and after a time the house was still. She rose and mechanically began to disrobe; she stood at length, in her snowy night-dress, ready for her couch. She never knew what made her do it. She had not done it since she was a wee, woe little thing, at her own mother's knee. But she knelt down, and burying her face in the side of the couch, sobbed. "Oh, God, help me for Christ's sake!" The sound of her own voice frightened her. She crept into bed, shivering and sobbing, and wept herself to sleep.

She slept soundly and long, and woke in the late morning with a heavy head, but a strong heart. She felt as if the angel of the Lord had descended and taken up his abiding-place in her heart. She met Leonard Livingstone with a white, calm face.

"No," she said, when he went to take her in his arms. "You must not touch me. I have come to a decision, and I never want you to come nearer me than you are now. I see my sin and folly very plainly, and I thank God it is no greater. I wonder I could have been so blind. But a new light has come to me, and I think I can never be the same girl I was before last night. You must go back to your wife. I do not love you, and never can. I will be your friend, but nothing more."

That was her answer, and the man was completely dumbfounded. He had not expected this reply. It startled and amazed him. But he was not a thoroughly bad man. Her words set him to thinking. It seemed to him that an angel shone out of her face when she spoke. He went away a changed man. He went back to his wife, and he thanks God every day that Agnes answered him as she did.

And Agnes? she did not become a world-famous singer as she had dreamed. She was famous in a local way, but she married a good man one day, one she loves very dearly, and she sings his children to sleep at twilight now with the peace that passeth understanding in her heart. God walks with her day and night, and she does not swerve from the path He has pointed out.

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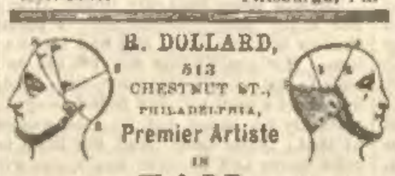

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OBSERVATIONS.

BY MAX ADELER.

—We bought a new dog this spring; but the speculation was not thoroughly successful. The man who brought him around turned him loose in the yard, and then left. When we went out to get acquainted with him he was engaged in exploring the slop-bucket with his nose, and as we approached he merely glanced around and growled. We attempted to pat him on the head, and then he suddenly dropped a mouthful of meat, and took three or four very earnest snaps at our hand and leg. We were afraid somebody would steal him, so we enticed him that evening into the kitchen with a bone, and locked him in. He scratched the door and howled all night, and breakfast was late in the morning because he wouldn't let the hired girl come into the kitchen. When we got him into the yard, we found that he had upset the bread that was rising, and had knocked eight plates off of the dresser, during his nocturnal skirmishes. The next evening, we felt as if we would prefer that somebody *would* steal him, and we locked him out He amused himself that night scratching at the door to get in, and howling. He can howl more effectually than any other dog we ever met. You would have thought we had a menagerie in the yard, if you could have heard him. That day he killed the pet cat, belonging to Smith next door, and removed a couple of mouthfuls from the leg of Chubb's boy, who came over into our yard after his ball. Then he tore one of the sheets from the clothes-line, and gambolled with it until it was reduced to rags When the ash-man came, in the afternoon, he had a dog, and our dog after a few sociable sniffs organized a combat with the ash-man's dog, and they rolled over and over among our tulips and hyacinths for half an hour, taking nips out of each other and scattering hair about by the handful. On toward evening he had a fit on a pillow-case which was bleaching on the grass-plat; and just as we were sitting down to tea a policeman arrived with a warrant, sworn out by Chubb, for our arrest for keeping a ferocious animal upon our premises We went around and paid the fine; and that night our house was robbed, and the dog kept perfectly still till morning, although we bought him for the very purpose of scaring off burglars. Anybody who wants to buy a dog, may have ours cheap. We will sell him at a sacrifice. We yearn to realize on that animal.

—An earnest inquirer after truth asks us this question: "In escorting a lady to the table which arm should the gentleman offer, and upon which side of him should the lady sit?" It seems to us that either arm might be offered, without impropriety, and if it would make her any happier you might offer her both at once. As for the proper side upon which to sit we should strongly recommend the *outside*, unless the gentleman happens to be unusually large We do not profess to know much about etiquette, but this seems the better way, partly because it would be very uncomfortable for the lady to sit inside the gentleman, and partly because it would attract attention. There is nothing wrong about it. It is not prohibited by the constitution or the catechism, but still we would recommend the outside, particularly if she wears hoops and wishes to shuffle her feet.

—An English paper received at this office contains a marked article entitled, "What has become of England's supremacy?" If this conundrum is addressed to us we are free to say that we do not know. We have not got it. If Mr. Gladstone has any doubt of the truth of this statement, he may send a man over here to search us and to examine our trunk and bureau-drawers. We are incapable of appropriating such an article, but there is a bald-headed office-holder across the street from our house who might justly be suspected of the crime. We do not know that he has taken any English property, but he is a man who has a constitutional tendency to take anything that comes to hand, from a tax collectorship to a cold in the head. If anybody gave him a chance to steal an island, he would be miserable because he couldn't embezzle an entire archipelago; or if he took your gold watch, he would cry for a month because nobody offered him an opportunity to filch the State House clock. He has more gigantic ideas on the subject of theft than that boy of thirteen referred to in the papers a few days ago, who "ran away with a circus!"

—A correspondent asks us the following question: "Is the letter a in Latin always pronounced long or not?" Neither. It is simply pronounced a, and that is all. We cannot imagine what induced you to suppose that it was pronounced like the word "long" or the word "not." The letter a bears no sort of resemblance to either of the monosyllables in question, and it would be as reasonable to give it the same sound as to pronounce the letter e like the word "metempsychosis," or the figure 4 as if it were spelled "wheelbarrow," instead of f-o-u-r. Do not attempt these innovations upon the Latin language. It is a dead language and cannot defend itself; and to attack a corpse is cowardly.

—The man who lives just back of us, Chubb, has a yellow tom cat whose intelligence is almost human. Chubb's cat possesses a voice like a Tuscarora Indian, and when it gets out in the yard on a moonlight night and meets a cat with different political views, and reasons with it and indulges in animated conversation and lifts out handfuls of fur, you can hear the debate for a mile and a half. Chubb used to be much annoyed by the continual disturbance, and he would disperse the meeting with bullets and other projectiles. But at last he noticed that his remonstrances had no effect. The more soap-cups and boots he fired into the yard the louder his yellow tom-cat would screech; and when he would bang away with his gun, the cat would send out a wild unearthly yowl which would wake people within fifteen squares and set eight or ten thousand dogs to barking. It seemed so queer to Chubb that his cat always refused to move on when hit, that he determined one night to watch it. Just at dusk he observed that cat drag about twelve inches of old stove-pipe out from under a bush and crawl into it. Then the cat inserted its legs through four holes that had been punched in the iron, and with its head projecting through the end, and its body clad in armor, it winked at Chubb, and rambled off to attend the mass-meeting Chubb says now that he wouldn't take a thousand dollars for that cat; but if we do not tunnel under Chubb's yard some night and blow his tom-cat into eternity with a submarine torpedo, it will be very singular. We admire ingenuity, but a vociferous tom-cat makes us unhappy.

—We have just perfected an invention which will probably relieve us in the future from the persecution of life-insurance agents and book canvassers. It is in the nature of a Patent Combination Reflexaction Door-scraper. We fasten it down by the side of the lowest step in front of our house, and wait until a book-canvasser comes along, which one is tolerably certain to do within fifteen or twenty minutes. The canvasser stops to scrape his boots, while he thinks up some new and vigorous exaggeration with which to impose on us. As his foot touches the iron, two clamps fly over his instep and hold him fast, a steel claw suddenly shoots up his leg and grabs his trowsers; a trap flies open in the pavement, and the victim is hauled into the coal-cellar, where we have an infuriated Irishman engaged to mellow him and flatten him out with a scoop-shovel or a hatchet. We allow the Irishman a royalty upon the remains, and he seems to be animated by an earnest enthusiasm which promises rich results. If the machine works well, we shall either buy a graveyard or found a medical college. In the meantime, persons in want of bodies for dissection or other purposes will please apply. These corpses will be closed out at a sacrifice to cash purchasers.

—One of the most touching cases of generosity with which we are familiar, was that of our friend Crumm of Indiana. His wife secured a divorce from him, and announced her intention of marrying again. About six weeks before the wedding, Crumm accidentally shot himself in the leg, and the doctors were compelled to amputate the limb to save his life. As soon as Crumm got around again he extracted the bone from the excised member, and had it worked up into handles for a dozen fine table-knives which he gave to the late Mrs. Crumm for a bridal present, and the remainder was turned into two gross of double-eyed suspender buttons which were enclosed with a congratulatory note to the groom. These instances of unselfish devotion are as rare as they are beautiful.

—A woman who is considering the matter of her spring hat, is an interesting subject for contemplation. First she buys a straw frame that looks as if it had been struck by a hurricane and then sat on by an entire coroner's jury. After that when she rides in a street-car, she drinks in the details of every spring hat that enters, and learns them all by heart, and does mental sums over the cost of the ribbon, and makes up her mind to have flowers in her's like those worn by the woman in the corner, and lace like that gawky-looking creature in the middle. And when she walks down the street she studies all the hats that come along, and when a woman passes her with one on, she twists her neck around to see how it looks behind, and is disgusted to see that the woman also is dislocating her neck, to see how she trims *her* hat. When she arrives in front of a millinery store, she lingers until she has analyzed all the spring hats in the window, and she determines to trim her's nineteen different ways, and decides *not* to have flowers like those of the woman who sat in the corner. Then she shoots into the store, and asks to "see hats," with the air of a person who has a whole female seminary to rig out with eighty-dollar head-gear. She examines every hat in the establishment, overhauls ten bushels of flowers, gets about twenty dollars worth of work out of the saleswoman, and then says she will "look further." Then she goes home with her mind fixed on thirty-eight or nine different styles, in which she wants to trim her hat. After awhile she begins to think she ought to have a feather in it, and she passes two or three sleepless nights trying to decide whether to put one on or not. At last she resolves she will. Then she lies awake for two more nights endeavoring to determine whether it shall be red or blue. She fixes on blue. She buys the trimming and sews it on in seventy successive positions, her mind filled with deepest anxiety as to whether the feather should go on the right side, the left side or on top. She puts it on the right side, but just then Mrs. Brown passes the front window with a feather on the left side of her's, and so she changes it. The next morning Mrs. Ferguson calls, and *her* feather is on the right side, and then another change is made. At church the next day, Mrs. Smith has feathers on both sides, and Mrs. Johnson has one on top. Then more sleepless nights and more painful uncertainty. At last, in utter despair she takes the hat to a milliner's and pays ten dollars to have it trimmed. When it comes home she pronounces it "hateful," and picks it all to pieces, and broods over it, and worries and frets, and loses her appetite and feels life to be a burden for a week or two longer, until suddenly she hits just the right thing, and becomes once more serene and happy, and puts the hat on and goes out to make millions of other women miserable, because their hats are not trimmed exactly like her's. As a wife, woman is a blessing; as a mother, she is an inestimable boon; as an organizer of spring hats, she is simply an object of compassion.

ADJUSTMENT.

BOOTMAKER (who has a deal of trouble with this customer.) "I think, sir, if you were to cut your corns, I could more easily find you a pair—"

CHOLERIC OLD GENTLEMAN. "Cut my corns, sir! I ask you to fit me a pair of boots to my feet, sir. I'm not going to plane my feet down to fit your boots! ! !"

The Saddest of all is Loving.

BY MARGARET AUDLEY DOUGLASS.

On the door-step of a house in the *Faubourg La Villette* stood a young girl; she was leaning on her broom, and as the morning sun streamed over her, it was the prettiest picture one would wish to see, this girl, with her dark, piquant face, so merry and careless.

It was very quiet around her; besides herself there was no living creature in sight, except two stray chickens and a lean gray cat; now and then she could hear the roll of a drum or the sound of a wagon rumbling through a neighboring street, while at intervals she could catch the hum of voices and hear the sounds of steps, all going in the same direction. Marguerite knew why all turned the same way. This was the day appointed for the drawing of lots—this was the day that was to bring sorrow to many a home, and send brothers and lovers to face death, perhaps to find a grave, on the field of battle.

Though these thoughts flitted through her mind, they brought only a passing shadow into her face. She had no one to lose. Her grandfather was too old to be called upon, and Gaspard—the shadow deepened a moment, but faded away—no, certainly he would not go; she was sure of that; quite sure. And the little face grew merry and careless again, and when the old gray cat rubbed itself against her dress she bent down with a laugh to stroke it gently.

Some one was coming toward her. Marguerite looked at the advancing figure, then turned away and devoted herself to the cat. A few seconds more and the man stood at her side saying: "Good-morning, Ma'amoiselle Klaisy."

With an affectation of surprise the girl turned, and mimicking his grave voice responded—

"Good-morning, Monsieur Desquere."

"I have come to say good-bye," he added, abruptly.

"Is it permitted one to ask where you are going?" she said in the same tone, though her face changed slightly.

"Yes, if it interests you. I was one of those drafted."

"You?" then there was a pause.

"Yes; good-bye, ma'amoiselle, we are to leave Paris perhaps to-night."

"Good-bye. I wish I were you, to be able to fight, to win honor!" she said, in her usual tone, holding out her hand to him.

He did not take it, but began huskily—

"Marguerite, is this all? No other word than good-bye, to say to me? I who have loved you so long! Marguerite, you have trifled long enough—perhaps you and I may never meet again."

"You choose a late day to tell me that you love me, monsieur; perhaps the idea of the battle frightened you? Surely the honor is too great for me!" she said, leaning against the wall, a little amused smile dimpling her dark cheek; but when he raised his eyes her face was as quiet as his own.

"Marguerite!" he pleaded, "you do not care for me! If you do, I have everything to live, to hope for; and if not, I pray God I may be killed," he ended, passionately.

"Bah! this is nonsense; the cannon has frightened away monsieur's usual prudence and discretion," she rejoined mockingly, the same little smile flitting across her face as he turned his eyes away. Gaspard should be punished; what right had he to meet her day after day, to show his love in looks, not words, then accuse her of *trifling*. She would tease him first, and then—of course she loved him; her every thought was of and for him.

He raised his eyes presently, no longer patient or beseeching, but fierce and angry.

"Do you know you have called me *coward?*" he asked between his closed teeth.

"Have I? Well, perhaps—"

He cut short her words.

"If I had known what you thought of me, I might have spared myself this humiliation. You do not love me, you never have, or your words would have been unspoken."

Catching his breath with a quick, sharp gasp, he raised his cap and bowed deeply. Then, before she recovered from her surprise, he was striding down the street.

"Gaspard!" she called, but so feebly, the sound died almost before it was uttered. Again she called his name. If he heard, he made no sign, for she could see the tall, lithe figure steadily going its way.

As the sound of his footsteps grew fainter and fainter, her face hardened and its light died out, until it was sterner and colder than his when he had told her good-bye.

A little while longer she stood in the door, until the old deaf grandfather within wondered querulously what she could find pleasant to look at in the quiet street. She only saw the row of silent houses, a glimpse of pale-blue sky, the green grass forcing its way between the stones, and the warm, yellow sunlight casting its noonday glare over the whole—certainly she had seen it often before!

She was staring steadily before her, but with eyes that saw nothing, and a heart in which love, remorse and anger were striving hard for mastery. And day after day she stood in the doorway, waiting for some one who never came. By and by she learned that the company had left the city.

Three months passed slowly by, leaving on Marguerite's face traces of the anxiety they brought. Hardly recognizable was the once merry face; the hollow eyes were dull and heavy, and the little red mouth, that before seemed only formed for mirth, was pitiful—its lips pressed together as if to prevent the utterance of words that her heart repeated night and day.

The shadow seemed to pass from her, for a time, when she heard that Gaspard and his companions had returned to the city; hearing it, she told herself, "It's my punishment; I deserve that he should no longer love me—but anything—I can bear it all, except his death. My God, protect him!" and with the prayer there fell hot tears, almost the first she had shed. Quickly drying her eyes, she put her lace-bobbins again in motion, for however much one may love, it is necessary to live, and in certain ranks of life if *to live* and *to work* are not exactly synonymous, they undoubtedly stop at the same point.

So for a little time she comforted herself that he was safe, but soon her heart cried out for something more, and the old gray shadow crept slowly over her face again.

One afternoon, when her heart beat its surest, and it seemed to her as though she would gladly give her soul for one kind word from him, they met.

Half passing, she looked at him, love and sorrow painted on her face; but the humble words she would have uttered died on her parted lips, as he passed her with moody, half-averted gaze.

Dropping her head on her breast she hurried homeward, pale and stern; once as she pushed her way through the crowded streets, hard, bitter thoughts rose in her mind, and words that were almost a curse, were half-spoken, when with a quick revulsion of feeling, tears started to her eyes, and she muttered, "I deserve it, this is my punishment; I mocked his love, and *now*—" She left the rest unspoken. Entering the house with weary step, she drew out her lace and forced herself to work steadily through the long evening; the trembling of her lip the only outward sign of the battle raging within her; a demon seemed to whisper in her ear, and—God knows it is easier to remember the wrong done you, than the wrong you have done.

Another month has passed, and this evening Marguerite, paler and sadder than ever, sits in the doorway working. On the step below her is seated the old grandfather, who warms his hands in the sunlight and mutters to himself childishly. Other people are seated in their doorways; children play about the street and the women talk to each other from the windows in their keen, shrill voices.

The yellow sunbeams flicker through the trees, casting a patchwork of light and shade upon the stone pavement below, while now and then a handful of leaves are stripped off by the wind and float lazily to the ground, where they lie forming a mosaic of red and brown. At intervals the sound of firing rises on the still air; every one knows it must come from the reconnoitring party that was sent out a short while before, therefore it attracts little attention, except from the group of men who stand in a doorway talking; one interrupts himself to turn in the direction of the sound and say, "Another poor devil carried off; that's the way; we give our lives for France, and get tumbled a hundred in one hole as our reward—then people yell *vive l'Empereur!* but not one word they say of the *soldiers*, poor devils!"

Marguerite hears the words, and her face turns westward also. Gaspard is one of the party. Her lips move, but she cannot pray, her brain is numb with pain, and mechanically her hands resume their work.

The mellow sunset gives place to twilight; the street is becoming deserted, and Marguerite lights the candle and closes out the gloomy night, for the easterly wind has covered the sky with heavy storm clouds.

The old grandfather stations himself near the window, and as he puffs out a wreath of smoke from his pipe, he rubs his hands and mutters unintelligibly, ending with a mirthless chuckle, which echoes strangely through the silent room, and causes Marguerite to look round with a startled air.

Oh! what a weary evening it is; the minutes drag by as though they were years, and as her fingers skilfully finish off a cluster of fern leaves, she thinks—almost speaking her thoughts aloud—"If I could only go at once—I would kneel at his feet—beg him to love me a little—just a little. I would—"

But the clock strikes nine, and the old man rises and shuffles off to his bedroom. She is free to go, but she never rises from her chair; her face is white, but her resolution is taken—she will go and ask for the love she laughed at once; she will make amends for her trifling, and even if she humbles herself in vain, still it will be an atonement.

With feverish haste she throws a long cloak around her, and unlatching the door hurries along the street.

She knows by which gate the party left, and from its guard she can hear, perhaps, of Gaspard. Along the streets she hears men talking; they say the party returned a short time since—about half, that is; the remainder lie killed or wounded. She tells herself, "Gaspard is safe," she is sure of it, and then hurries on still faster.

Numbers of people are going in the same direction; some to welcome the living, others to look for their dead. The list of dead and missing has been sent out, but Marguerite does not stop to read it, she cannot, the crowd is too dense around it, although it has just been placed up.

The guard paces by her; she timidly tells her errand; the man points with his thumb in the direction of the list.

"But, you see, I cannot get near," she falters, waiting breathlessly for him to reply; he does at last:

"Gaspard Desquere is either killed or wounded, I forget which."

"What?" she questions, in a dazed way, as though she has not heard.

"Killed or wounded! Are you deaf? You can see the bodies down near the guard-house at the gate;" ending, he walks on.

Marguerite stands for a minute as if turned to stone, then with rigid face turns in the direction pointed out.

At a short distance from the gate she sees a dark, confused heap lying huddled together, waiting for transportation to hospitals or graveyards; while to and fro, noiselessly as dark shadows, pass the *Soeurs de Merci*, separating the wounded from the dead. The slipping of their beads, as they are told by some stiffening form, and now and then whispered *ones* seem to rise with weird distinctness above the sobs of women and children. Marguerite shivers as the scene passes before her—half expecting it to fade away like a dream: the reality is too horrible. By the glare of the torches she can see clearly the wild, white faces of the women as they search the ghastly heap—one, hardly more than a girl, has dropped senseless upon the form of her husband, while her baby, crowing with glee, twists his tiny fingers in his father's blood-clotted hair; there are old men and women, bent with age, and so hardened by care and trouble, that they look almost with indifference on their dead—this last sorrow, only a drop, loses itself in the ocean that has gone before. There are little children, who look around with wondering eyes, and girls, young like herself, who shrink back as she is doing. Marguerite sees it all, but without pity or sympathy, for a terrible fear is creeping into her heart, one that crushes aside all else.

With a mighty effort she controls herself, and passes among the bleeding, shattered bodies. She is trembling violently, and only one or two steps have been taken before she stumbles—the ground is slippery with blood. Stretching out her hand to save herself, it touches something wet and clammy; with a cry, she draws back—the light of a passing torch shows her what she has touched—the face of Gaspard Desquere. Blood-stained and disfigured as it is she knows it, and with a cry, terrible in its anguish, throws herself beside him. Catching his hands she kisses and chafes them, begging him to speak to her—to say he forgives—just one word—*only one.*

But the white lips are silent, and the glazed eye never changes—Gaspard Desquere is dead.

Not a tear or cry, except that first burst of despair, escapes her. Holding him in her arms, she bows her head, not to weep or pray, but *to think*—to realize to the uttermost what has befallen her; to drink the bitter cup to its very dregs; then to rise up and go back to the world and everyday life; to toil for her bread, while every heart-throb proves how well she has learned life's lesson—

The saddest of all, is loving.

Answers to Correspondents

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

P. S., (Makanda, Ill.,) asks: "Will you permit an old subscriber to ask you a few questions? 1st. When did you publish a novelette called ——? 2d. In the commercial statements we find the following: 'The operations of the Gold Exchange Bank' were as follows: 'Gold cleared—' so much. What do they mean by 'gold cleared?'" 1st. We do not remember—probably twenty years ago. 2d. It refers to the operations at the Gold Clearing House. The Clearing House is a central institution, at which the runners of the various banks meet every morning. Each bank settles with all the others for the check and draft business of the previous day, striking a balance with each separate bank, and paying or receiving the amount due to or from each bank. The Gold Clearing House is a New York institution, at which the gold debts and credits of the banks are settled.

THOMAS L., (Martinsville, N. C.,) asks: "1st. Is the story, 'The Cost of Conquest,' published in book form? If so, at what price? 2d. Is Jenny Lind living now? 3d. Is there a book on book-keeping with which one can learn without a teacher? 4th. What is the difference between a bank check and a draft? 5th. Do you think my writing is sufficiently good for a book-keeper? If not, how could I improve it?" 1st. It is not yet published. We cannot say now whether it will be or not. 2d. Yes, she was living at last advices. 3d. There are several such. Of course a teacher is requisite to rapid progress. 4th. There is no special difference in principle, though they differ somewhat in form. A check is a right draft or order on a bank to be paid to the holder or his order. A draft is a right or time order on a debtor, to be paid to some person named therein. It, as well as a check, may be sold to a third party and pass through several hands before reaching the party on whom it is drawn. 5th. Your writing is not sufficiently good for the purpose. Careful practice may improve it.

W. M., (White Pigeon, Michigan,) says: "We have taken your paper as long as I can remember, and I like it best of all the weekly papers. I don't wish to intrude, yet want to ask a question or two. 1st. Where can I get Lucile, by Owen Meredith? And what will it cost me? 2d. I have clerked in a drug store four years, what wages should I get? 3d. I am in love (an old story) and believe I am loved, yet I cannot get away to see my own, as she lives a long 700 miles away. She thinks I could come if I wished, but I cannot, and I fear she will begin to doubt me. What shall I do to prove to her that I am true? How does my writing rank for a 18-year-old boy?" 1st. We can procure it for you. Price from $1.25 to $4.00 for different editions. 2d. You should get what you are worth to your employer. What that is you know best yourself, or you and no should decide. There is no fixed standard of prices for druggists' clerks, and we could name no price that would answer for all persons and all sections of the country. 3d. How much heart-burning would be saved if people would only quit falling in love. But that is a matter in which there is no hope of a return. The first man commenced life by loving, and we presume the last man will die of love for some charming creature. Your inamorata is apparently a little unreasonable. You will have to try and make her perceive this. Frankly explain your situation to her, and she will probably see it as you do, however anxious she may be for your presence. Your writing is passable, but there is room for improvement.

I. M. M., (Madisonville, Tennessee,) asks: "Please inform me what Lippincott's Gazetteer of the world would cost. And also Tennyson's and Longfellow's poetical works." It will cost, in one volume, $10.00, in two volumes $14.00. Longfellow's and Tennyson's poems can be had for $1.25 each, diamond edition; $3 50 for a finer edition in larger print.

KANO, (Colorado,) writes: "I have noticed for some time your patience and good sense in answering questions, and therefore take the liberty, being a subscriber, to trouble you with a few. 1st. Where and for what price can I procure Mark Twain's last book? 2d. What causes the warm winds coming from the snowy range in the winter that we have in this country, or rather blowing eastward from that direction? 3d. Is the book called Pemberton, and advertised in the Post, a story formerly published in the Post, or an historical romance? 4th. How many different church denominations are there in the world? 5th. What are the chemicals that compose alkali? 6th. What do you think of my penmanship?" 1st. We can procure it for you. Price $3 50. We presume you refer to the work called "Roughing It." 2d. The warm winds referred to certainly do not originate in the snowy range. They are probably winds coming from the Pacific coast, where the temperature is considerably higher for the same latitude than further east. Or they may be southwest winds, which the mountains have given a set to the east. 3d. It was published in the Post, and is an historical romance. 4th. Probably about 100 different sects of the Christian church. There are about fifty in the United States. 5th. Alkalies are compounds of the electrically positive metals with oxygen; the metals sodium, potassium, magnesium, &c., combining with oxygen to form soda, potash and magnesia. They are possessed of qualities the reverse of those of acids, restore vegetable blues which have been reddened by acids, and turn vegetable yellows brown. They have great chemical activity, and their most remarkable property is the avidity with which they combine with acids, the properties of both becoming neutralized, and a chemical salt formed. 6th. You write an excellent hand.

INQUISITIVE JACK, (Texas), asks: "1st. Is my handwriting good? 2d. Is anything sent by express allowed to be opened and examined when it is marked C. O. D., to be collected? And if not called for in thirty days, can the express agent sell it for charges if you authorize them to return it to you if not called for? 3d. Could the agent hurt any one for sending anything worthless by express that would not pay charges if sold, say, a box of dirt? 4th. Are there any counterfeiters in New York, that any one knows of? 5th. Is there any such thing as an over-issue of greenbacks, and is it of any account? 6th. Do you publish any humbug cards in your paper? I know that some papers do. 7th. What of my composition, if it is correct? 8th. Is the —— genuine, and what does it consist of? Is it anything paying?" 1st. No. 2d. No, unless the express company has good reason to suspect something wrong. If ordered to be returned, unless called for, it is their business to return it, and they probably would do so unless there was some misunderstanding. 3d. If people try to play practical jokes, they must be prepared to risk the consequences. The company would not be likely to proceed against you for sending a worthless article, if not dangerous or offensive; but if you make a false representation, and they should choose to bring suit, they would probably hurt you a little. 4th. There are none—not of the prisons—that honest people know of. There may be many that swindling rogues know of. 5th. There can be no issue of greenbacks further than is provided for by law. If the law should authorize more than the country required, that would constitute, in one sense, an over-issue. But such is generally thought not to be the case at present. 6th. Not knowingly. Of course we must admit that there are humbugs shrewd enough to humbug even us. Therefore, we do not vouch for the credibility of any advertisement. 7th. It is not correct. We have mended it somewhat, but have left this question as you wrote it. Would it not read much better to ask: "Is my composition correct?" 8th. We know nothing about it.

IGNORAMUS, (Virginia,) writes: "I see you are very kind in answering the many questions concerning love, &c. Will you tell me a few things? 1st. A friend of mine, a worthy lady, has been very highly recommended to a gentleman who has been divorced from a former wife. The lady does not object to receiving his attentions, only on that account. Her friends are very anxious for her to encourage him, and she thinks him every way worthy, but cannot give her consent to marry him because he has been divorced, the wishes of her friends to the contrary notwithstanding. Now, do you think she ought to let that influence her? 2d. Would it be proper for a lady to grant two gentlemen the privilege of addressing her at the same time, or either, if she does not intend to marry? 3d. When you are introduced to any one and they say, 'I am happy to make your acquaintance,' what should you say? 4th. When a gentleman asks a lady to accompany her home and she consents, and after he has gone part of the way home with her, remembers he has some pumpkin-seeds to take home, and it is inconvenient for him to do both, which do you think he ought to do, take the girl home or the pumpkin-seeds? 5th. Why is it a custom to set eggs at Easter? 6th. Why is the last day of October called Hallow Eve? and why is it said that spirits are astir on that evening? 7th. What do you think of my writing and orthography for a girl of fifteen?" 1st. She should be governed by her own views and inclination in the matter, "the wishes of her friends to the contrary notwithstanding." It is she that is to be married, not her friends, and if she feels that the fact of the gentleman's having been divorced will cause her future unhappiness, she should not permit her friends to urge her into undesirable relations. Different persons view this question of divorce very differently, and each one is his or her own best judge in the matter. 2d. No lady has a right to deceive either one or two gentlemen, any more than a gentleman has to deceive one or two ladies; but she has a right to have a dozen visiting her at the same time. 3d. You might say "Thank you, the pleasure is reciprocal," or any other polite reply. 4th. He should take the lady home, as he has engaged to do—unless there is some one else to attend the lady, and she is willing to dispense with his services, which she probably would be, as it is not right to cross any one in their love—even for pumpkins. 5th. The origin of the custom is lost in obscurity. The egg has always been considered emblematic of life, and thus naturally becomes associated with the idea of the resurrection. 6th. Because it is the evening preceding All Hallows', or All Saints' Day. The witches hold their saturnalia on this evening, knowing that they dare not be abroad for a considerable time succeeding. 7th. Your orthography is correct; your writing passable for your age.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

A "NOVEL" ENIGMA.

I am composed of 44 letters.

My 39, 15, 2, 7, 15, 25, 20, 23, 4, 35, 8, 39, 32, 33, 41, 26, is a novel by Mrs. Oliphant.

My 18, 16, 6, 9, 7, 8, 18, 24, 4, 30, 2, 22, is a novel by T. A. Trollope.

My 3, 10, 11, 39, 12, 17, 15, 29, 10, 26, 5, is a novel by Christian Reid.

My 7, 15, 2, 1, 8, 10, 6, 30, 12, 36, is a novel by Pierce Egan.

My 38, 16, 28, 40, 9, 2, 24, 6, 27, 3, is a novel by Bulwer.

My 3, 27, 16, 21, 3, 43, 32, 24, 31 is a novel by Annie Thomas.

My 42, 7, 19, 14, 39, 7, 8, 44, is a novel by Henry Kingsley.

My 37, 24, 7, 39, 36, is a novel by Katherine S. Macquoid.

My 3, 31, 6, 24, is a novel by Pierce Egan.

My whole is a beautiful American novel and its author.

GAHMEW.

Fort Totten, D. T.

BURIED RIVERS.

1. What is an ounce of gold in dust worth?
2. Air raw, add your clothing for comfort.
3. What a beautiful buggy that was!
4. I suppose such in the case.
5. Murray Go, can another go also?

NELOM.

RIDDLE.

My 1st is in yacht, but not in sail,
My 2d is in snow, but not in hail,
My 3d is in oats, but not in corn,
My 4th is in eve, but not in morn,
My 5th is in many, but not in few,
My 6th is in kill, but not in slew,
My 7th is in tune, but not in song,
My 8th is in line, but not in prong.
My whole is a valley very well-known,
Which is to be found in the temperate zone.

NELLIE.

Holland Patent, N. Y.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

BURIED CHARADE—Lark-spur.
ENIGMA—Olive King, New York City.

RECEIPTS.

TO BOIL NEW POTATOES.—When fresh dug take the small potatoes, not quite ripe, wash clean, then rub the skin off with the hand—never use a knife—and put them into boiling water, with a little salt, and boil quickly; when done drain dry and lay into a dish, spreading a little butter over them, or boil some new milk, put in a great spoonful of butter, and thicken with a little flour wet smooth with milk. When the potatoes are cooked and laid in the dish, pour this dip over them. This is very nice.

PIE CRUST.—Most of people cannot eat pies because the crusts are shortened with lard, which renders them indigestible. A sweet and very excellent pie-paste may be made by using thick sour cream instead of lard and water. Of course soda must be used in the cream. Let those who have dyspepsia and cannot eat pies made in the ordinary way, try this way of making their pie paste. Others use sour milk or butter-milk, and shorten a little with butter or suet, either of which is preferable, and by far healthier than the old way.

JELLY CAKE.—Half a pound of white sugar, quarter of butter, eight eggs beaten separately; one pound of flour, juice and grated rind of one lemon, half a tea-spoonful of yeast powder. Beat and mix as well as for pound-cake, and bake very thin on tins. While hot, spread each layer with jelly or marmalade, placing one layer on another until there are six or eight layers. Ice the top, or sift powdered sugar thickly upon it.

ALMOND CAKE.—One pound of sugar, three quarters of butter, three-quarters of flour, ten eggs. Mix as pound-cake; add half a pound of blanched almonds beaten fine, one teaspoonful of rose-water.

SPONGE CAKE.—Twelve eggs, the weight of these in pulverized sugar, the weight of these in sifted flour, juice of a lemon. Beat the yelks and sugar well together, add whites whipped to a froth, and flour. Bake in a quick oven.

PUDDINGS WITHOUT EGGS.—Rice, large pearl sago, and tapioca are best when made without eggs. Sprinkle a little of any one of the above at the bottom of a pudding-dish; add a little sugar, and fill up with milk. Stir well before placing in the oven. To the sago add a small piece of cinnamon broken up. The rice must bake quite four hours, the sago and tapioca about three. Skim-milk will do if you cannot spare new milk.